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The Heart of an Orphan



Amanda
Mathews



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Amanda Mathews Chase

August 13 1948



"Dear Mother of my hart, — "

Frontispiece

THE HEART OF AN ORPHAN

BY
AMANDA MATHEWS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
W. T. BENDA

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TO
MY GOOD ANGEL
ADA HENRY VAN PELT

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THE HEART OF AN ORPHAN

DEAR Mother of my hart,—

I hope you don't mind my putting that name on you when I aint nothing to you any more than some little cat you patted once. I don't know where you are at and you don't know where I am at so it don't matter much what I call you.

We aint all hole orfunns in this sylum. Lots of us is halves and the halves write to their whichever they got left every wens-day. The holes can write too if they got anybody and a stamp. I am a hole and I aint got the stamp or anybody so I will take my pen in hand to let you know I am well and hope you are the same.

This letter will surprise you only you won't never get it so it can't surprise you much. I aint seen you for so long about

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3 years I gess. I was a little girl then do you remember me in the Busy Bee Sewing Club at the coledge setelment? I sat at the end of the row and got tangels on purpus so you would come and lift them out. You had a smile on you like anything and I loved you. So did the other girls but not like me. I always knew in my hart when it was the day to sew in the Busy Bee Club.

O I would I had a picksure of you dear one and swete but why do I say that because I have your picksure in my head. You were not old or kidish or tall or sawdoff you were just right.

Do you remember that day you went to my house that was a better day than any since. We laughed because you sat on the busted chair by misssteak. Do you remember how my mama she coffd and coffd something awfool. Well she died in 1 year and 3 weeks. There was Tony and Isabella and me. Tony died in the ospittle

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poor Tony. My papa died. It seemed like we had the habbit in our family. I said I wunder if me or Isabella will die next time. I do not care much for to be an orfun is a hard life for anybody but I did not die.

Me and Isabella come to live at this sylum but Isabella was pretty and little so a kind lady took her for her own. I cried and cried and said to the maytrun O keep her till I get big enufh to adop her myself but she said no you are too yung. I beged for them to let me see her not awfun but some times 2 or 3 in a yere but the kind lady said no I want her to forget you and all her passed. I no not where the kind lady has her or if she is dead by this time.

Nobody wants to adop me because I am long and black in my hair and eyes. They do not like orfuns to be long and black. I know because I heard them say when they never knew I did. Can I help that mama

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and papa was daygoes? I guess not. But Isabella the kind lady said was a little brunet buty so she took her for her own.

Dear Mother of my hart, I heard the maytrun tell the halves it is not polite to write about me and nun about you but what can I write of you when you went away before my mother died and I know not where you may be.

O dear mother what can I call you more than dear and swete? O dear dear dear mother I love you for papa and mama and Tony poor Tony and Isabella the kind lady took her for her own. When a family is only 2 like me and you mother we must love very much don't you think? I will close with 9,000,000,000 kisses and some more.

Your long black dawter, Giovanna.

Mother of my hart,

You will be glad to hear your dear dawter is treeted first rayte in this sylum. It

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is a Christian sylum, we have prayers every day and py on satterday. The peaces are small but what does that matter? I would not like to be a beggar on the street.

There are 95 orfunns counting holes and halves. The maytrun is not mean but O I want some person to love me. The maytrun can not do that no wuman can love 95 orfunns how could she?

We have school but not satterday and sunday for the Lord said let us take a rest so he hollered it. I like reading but not rithmetick, what is the good of xampels about money and apples and orunges when you have nun? I like to draw and sing. I usto hate goggerfry but now no more for when I study of any place I say who knows but the mother of my hart is there? When the teacher tells point E. and W. and N. and S. I say which way do I point at my dear but I get no ans. My teacher does not like me too much because my

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temper is bad so is my writing. We must be as neat as we are able and never speak when at the table.

Why I made some poetry I never knew I could.

Mother of my hart I hate my close. I know that is very bad but how would you like to look like 95 orfuns? so nobody could tell which one you are. I am long and black like I said and blue is not my culler. I feel my legs like any thing and my arms too but I think it is better than rags. I am thank full I am not a beggar on the street. So I am great full to the maytrun and the ladys of the board.

I sleep in a dormit I can not spell it with 20 orfuns no 19 it is no fare to count myself. The girls wash the dishes and spread up the beds and we have a bath in the tub 2 times a month and our neckeneres washt ever week.

Sunday afternune is for visitors only nobody comes to visit me. It aint that



May 1905

"I ran for the letters and put them in your hand"

The Heart of an Orphan

candy is not swete to me as to others but a loving word would give me much more joy but that is not for me I did not cry last sunday like I awfun do because I thot of you mother dear dear dear tho far away. I played you come in the door in your pink dress the same you usto wear. A lady said onct but not to me she came to stair at the Busy Bees when we sewed. She said you hadn awt to wear a dress we could never hope to own but what is the matter with hopeing any thing? It dont cost nuthing even an orfun can hope. You come in like I said and when you see me you cried out why if here aint my little Giovanna and you set down on the bench by me and I lened over to you with my head and the maytrun says Giovanna have you gotta crick in your neck and you don't like her to say that so you go away.

If you love me as I love you no nife can cut our love into. I didn make that a girl told it to me.

The Heart of an Orphan

We say our prayers at night kneeling by our beds every body at once like a big song up to God. I prayed Lord bless my dear mother but the girl next she is a half and she said shut up you hole you aint got nun so I slapt her good for I got you darlling even if you dont know it.

All the orfuns are putting up their pens and I must do the same.

Your loving long black dawter,
Giovanna.

Mother of my hart,

Since I rote last I had a hard time. I have been out in the cold crule world. Give me a sylum every time. There was a wuman looking over the orfuns and she wanted a big one and she found falt with me for not being bigger now what do you think of that? She wanted some body to help with the dishes and such she called it light work and the maytrun said if she

The Heart of an Orphan

would send me to school and not work me hevy she could have me.

I didn like her looks but I thot praps she would do for sorta plane mother not the sunday mother of my hart so do not be jellus dear one I love but you and that is true and our secret.

When I got to her house I never saw such a durty kitshen and she made me clean it good and her mop was something fearce it smelt like garbige. I gess she hadn washt her dishes most never. I washt and washt and I washt and her dish rag it smelt the same.

She had a little boy and he walkt on the floor when it was wet and I told him no and he kickt me and I slapt him good and his ma slapt me gooder on the eres.

Finely she said I could go to bed and the sheets was durty and I cried for back at the sylum but it was far on 2 street cars so I didn know the way. I cried and I

The Heart of an Orphan

cried but I said whats the use she gotta take me back if am bad enufh. I will be bad like—no I didn say it out loud so it was no sware.

The next day I busted dishes like anything I sast her fearce and all I dun was misssteaks and such. Her little boy was much a frade. She said she would brake me but she coodn. She said much more I must not write for it was sware and I can not spell it anyway. She slapt me 100 times on my head and eres but I would not cry. I bit her good and she screamed. Finely she said you durty brat I take you back where I got you and I was glad but I said nuthing for fere she wouldn.

The maytrun was not mad on me for she told the wuman I was not vishus when treeted well. The wuman wanted to trade me for a better orfun but the maytrun wouldn let her goody!

I seem more near to you mother of my hart now I am back at the sylum. I lost

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your picksure outa my head when I was bad. I will be good for you, darlling, so you can be proud of your dawter. If I have thinks of you allways praps the thinks will fly to you like little birds. I will pray God to put wings to them.

Goodby with fond regards, Giovanna.

Swete mother of my hart,

Was it a dream you was here today? You lookt a little older and your dress was gray trimmed in pink. How funy I was that I could not speak. I guess you said she is a quere one. I was like a dum or-fun they took her off to an other sylum. I was so full inside there couldn nun of it get out so you thot I did not remember you as if that could be.

I can not forget any word you said to me. You told you was happy which makes me glad you bet. You said you had thots of me and ast and ast till you come where I was. I bleve that was because I had

The Heart of an Orphan

them thots of you and God gave them wings like I prayed. I am writing all so you won't think I am dum like I ack.

Now you are a goner and praps aint coming back for you didn say nuthing but I ran for the letters safe and tite under my matres and put them in your hand and you stuf them in your little bag made of silver chanes and you kist me goodby that is no dream.

Maybe praps you will write me a letter O there wont be a orfun in the wurld happy same as me! I won't be eggspect-ing it and Ile play I aint watching for the post man and when he comes and gives letters to the maytrun and she speaks my name Ile play I aint sure she menes me and Ile say did you call me maam and Ile run with the letter and hide under my bed in the dormit I can not spell it and Ile read and read. O you will write wont you dear dear darlling dear mother of



"You took me on your lap like I was a little orphan"

The Heart of an Orphan

my hart or I guess I will die I want you to so bad.

Your big old long black dawter,
Giovanna.

Mother of my hart,

I got spots all over me from bunting in to the furnishure when Ime trying to know is it true or not. I can't never tell you how I felt inside when you took me on your lap like I was a little orfun and my legs hung down most to the floor and I am too hevy for you.

You said to think you had a dawter like me and you never knew it and I was awful chokt and couldn find my hanky and you gave me yours and you needed it too and had to swipe up your tears on the other corner.

I said I guess you will write me a leter and you said letter nuthing I was your own preshus dawter and should go with

The Heart of an Orphan

you and I cried so hard you ast me didn
I want to go and I was scared for fere you
would leve me agen.

You said my letters was full of puns. I
am sorry but I don't see how it could be
for the maytrun is very care full and kepes
dope to kill them dead.

When ever I think of you down on my
knees I flop and I think so awfun it would
be cheeper to just walk round on my knees
but it would ware out my stockings and
the maytrun would be mad at me and I
can't bare to make anybody mad when I
am so happy.

O I will be good to you mother of my
hart. When you are poor I work for you.
When you get sick I sit all night by your
bed. I get crazy with the clock and I
like nights best for I can sleep or eles ly on
my pillo and make picksures of you in my
head.

O don't be long gone dear angle mother

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of my hart and don't let me be ever away
from you one day all my life any more.

Your own dawter,
Giovanna.

THE TRANSLATION OF GIOVANNA

*P*RESHUS *angle Mother—*

yes I will be payshunt not to come live by you. I awto be satisfide when you are somewhere loving me and I am somewhere loving you but I gotta sorry spot inside that you must be gone so far and long from me.

I usto hate my sylum close but now no more for its gotta pockit to keep your darling letter in. All day I love it with my hand and all night with my cheek. It makes a wisper in my pockit and I wisper back to it. I must be alright with God for him to let you come to me but I do not see how that can be for I am awfun nawty in my temper.

There is a hole orfun in this sylum with

The Translation of Giovanna

big moufh and little sents and stufs all in it like a baby. She grabt your letter and I grabt it back. I most slapt her but it ain't 2 weeks since I was an orfun my own self and she gotta be it all her life for a big moufh and little sents is wurse to adop than long and black like me and I didnt slap her.

My burthday usto be lost but now I gotta new one and its the day you took me for a dawter forever and ever Amen. But does that make me now a baby squawling on my cot? No it is the day when happy-ness sprowted in my sowl which the preecher says we all got one to be lost if we are wicket.

A new big orfun sleeps in our dormitory the maytrun spelt it. She wears a pompy-door on a mouse she made outa the maps in her joggerfry. She keeps a flurt book and a whiches dream book under her pillo and learns the girls of nights to dream and flurt but they cannot flurt much for

The Heart of an Orphan

their hankys are pined to their close and gloves fans and parysawls orfun's has nun. I put the sheet in my ears not to lissen because I know you wouldnt like me to. I could write how I love you on all the paper in the wurd and not have enufh.

your feckshunate dawter

Giovanna.

Angle darling Mother—

I leve the sylum tomorrow for the boarding school like you want me to. I am yours to put where you please.

I will tell you all that past today. I had a bath tho it was only the middel of the week. We allways walk 2 and 2 and we reech all down the block but this morning it was me with the maytrun and no more. I was much afrade the orfun's would brake themselves outa the windos where they loekt and wigled their hands to me.

P. S. They didnt.

We went to a big big big store and I

The Translation of Giovanna

lookt in a glass where I seen myself all of one peace for the furst time. I guessed I was humly but not like that. I scrooocht down for my dress to fall more on my legs but it wouldnt.

A lady made a shampoo on my head and a manycure on my nails. I felt cheep to let her do for me like I was a baby and I thankt her all I could and I felt awful nice and funny when it was finisht. The may-trun smiled and smiled like I never knew she could and she put dear on me as nobody does on orfuns.

O the close and close she bawt for me with your preshus money! White pettys like angles must wear and button shoes with tassels. O my toes wigle wigle how glad they are and I bleve I could go anywhere in 3 jumps. And a red silk dress that wispers wispers all the time like your letter in my pocket. Mother of my hart dont think I love you more for the close because I loved you the most I could all

The Heart of an Orphan

ready. I got so much love for you in me there aint hardly room for my breffh.

I ast the maytrun to let me take my orfun close for a remember what I usto wear before you took me.

The orfun lookt and lookt and her of the big moufh and little sents put her finger on my red dress and I let her. I am not glad for going. Orfun is not the wurst compny and this is where you was at 2 times with me. I will be awful good at the school so you will not be mortyfide on me.

your obeedyent dawter
Giovanna.

Angle Mother of my hart—

this is the night of my furst day at the Eggsloosif School where you got me put to learn manners and grammer.

I will write some good to prepair you for the wurst. The dining room is butyfull the lights is in red flowers and the plates

The Translation of Giovanna

is deckrated with roses and the glasses is made of diamons and there is pink babys stuck to the ceeling. The Eggsloosifs wear rings and lockits and bows. They laff laff fast and happy all the time. I lookt at them very much and was glad you put me so high by your love.

Orfunns pass the food but talk not. Eggsloosifs talk but pass not. A lady with teeny aprun must tote the food all round the table. The Principle sits at the end. If anybody is bad she does not speke it out for Eggsloosifs has tender sowls. She writes it on a peace of paper and the lady with the teeny aprun gives it to the girl on the quiet. She brung me one and I thot it must be lessons at dinner so I read it out loud and it said for me to look how the other girls ust their spoons and they all lafft and lafft at me to read it out. O it was no fare! It was no fare! They was mean to laff wasnt they Mother? I never knew it was on the quiet and I

The Heart of an Orphan

never knew my spoon must fall backward in my soup. I didnt feel my red dress no more. I felt all scrooocht down like I had on my orfun close. I was full of cry but I wouldnt let it out.

Then the lady clered off the table and set it agen with us looking and not helping nun. That seemed mean. I thot she did so for brekfas but no it was to ete some more. I couldnt so I wisht the orfun had my shair. I tried so as not to be quere but my swallo wouldnt ack.

I never seen when the lady come to me with gravey and I hit it with my elbow and it spilt on a girls dress and I pollygized the best I could but she was mad and she said the ideah of you being goose enufh to adop me and think you could make a lady outa me. I said I aint nuthing but she is and you let her be. I slapt that girl good on the cheek. When you slap poorness she will slap back but richness has histerick

The Translation of Giovanna

awful for her mother never gave her no spansks so this was her furst blow.

The Principle called me ungreatful protee jay to you or I wouldnt a dun what I dun. I ans. no mam I am a greatful jay to her no matter how I ack and she sorta chokt and sent me upstairs to think it over with my consents and my consents will ever say the same it was my falt to hit the gravey but the slap was not on me it was on her to put that name to you. When this letter flys where you are at there will fly the letter of the Principle to tell how bad I was all ready. I don't care! I don't care! O its fearce how I dont care and I got tear spots all over my red dress.

I guess its no use mother of my hart. I am not worth you should have such pains on me and thats the true. The ways of poorness is not the ways of richness the ways of badness is not the ways of good-

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ness. I aint no more fittn to be your dawter than the orfun of the big moufh and little sents. But O write to me that you do not hate me in your hart. Write that I am not all misssteak to you. Write how you kinda like me a little nawty and unfittn tho I be.

your awful sorry

Giovanna.

Preshus goner angle Mother—

it is now the night of my furst week at this school and you aint sent no ans. to my letter.

The Eggsloosifs say I am low to slap a girl so they got tayboo on me. They never speak to a tayboo cept they have to before a teacher and if anybody was good to that one they would put tayboo on her the same. They made a line with chak round my desk that nobody must cross to come by me. Then they talk how low I am like I had

The Translation of Giovanna

no ears. The class pote says I am a weed in the middel of the flowers. I never cry because I wouldnt do them that much good. I just hate them with my eyes. What's the good of a Jim suit when the music dont say nothing to your toes? I am so sorry all days that no lesson can stick to my mind.

But tayboos and such is not my big wo. I know in my hart you are sorry you took me for a dawter. I see now the kind you want like these Eggsloosifs but I got no good start to be that class. I was not made to be a parlor dawter to you Mother of my hart but let me be a kitshen dawter. No dishes would be greesy if I wash for you. No floors would be big and durty if I scrub for you! O dear dear mother dont throw me away for no good but keep me for a kitshen dawter.

your back door

Giovanna.

The Heart of an Orphan

Dear lady what usto be my Mother—

today I was in the class of gramer and the teacher said Giovanna what is chair and I ans. chair is a noun on which to set and the girls lafft and I had much mad and shame. I heard out on the street some one to cry potaytoes potaytoes.

It was the voice of Luigi a daygo he peddels by the sylum and he usto be frends with my father. I run out of that school awful quick. Luigi did not know me in my Eggsloosif dress and he ast do you want some potaytoes Miss? Then he knew me and I clum upon the wagon and I said go fast I wanto lope with you back to the sylum for I hate this school and all contaned. He whipt the horse round the corner and then more slow for it skun the potaytoes and I told him all and no lies. He ans. lopes was no fare to you so he stopt the wagon and down I clum and a teacher of the school come running and she held me by the hand like I would lope some more



W. Bodysfont Benda

"I put on my sylum dress and pined on my hanky"

The Translation of Giovanna

but I wouldnt. The girls lafft very much
and teezed me till I felt sick with shame
and mad. The class pote made a song.

see how low daygoes
run for potaytoes.

I hate that class pote I do indede. I hate
all the fokes I got and I lost all the fokes
I love. I will go now and put on my sylum
close so as to be ready for back when the
Principle will say you want me to. That
dress would be alright with me if it only
had an angle letter from you to wisper in
the pockit but now no more so my good
days are all dun. I guess God knew I was
not good enufh to be your dawter for that
he let me to spill the gravey and slap the
Eggsloosif so your love to me all friz up
in your hart.

her which usto be your dawter

Giovanna.

P. S. I put on my sylum dress and
pined on my hanky like I usto and I come

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where the girls was and they lookt and lookt and I said I wear the kind of close like what I am. I hate you all give me tin spoons and no tayboo. The girls lookt and lookt some more and lafft not. Then they was took with much shame on themselves and they pollygized for what they dun to me. They said I was darling and we cried some and lafft some and huged and kist very much and all said they ast me furst to borro my sylum dress for to ware in a play and we huged more and now I love Eggsloosifs same as orfun.

O but the best was to get your dear dear dear letter. O to think it was just a storm mussed up the railroad and you love me ever and allways the same!

Xcuse the funny spots my tears made them when I thot the chane between us 2 was busted. Now we can play they are laffs I am so glad!

G.

“LITTLE SISTER IN CAGE OF
GOLD”

MOTHER Mother Mother,—

When I make the start with that precous word I do not know to stop. O I love how you make G on envelops. I allways kiss that G I do indeed.

My new beautiful duster razen tailer soot came in a box today. If God had not dyed me so Daygo brown at first, Mother, I could look just like the Eggsloosifs of this school in that duster razen tailer soot. I cannot help my color but I would be no more Daygo inside because you are not. This is not mean to my dear parents for they are all dead and Tony got T. B. in his joynts and died in the ospittle poor Tony. Isabella was a little brunet beauty and a kind lady took her for her own and

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I know not if she is dead also but I think yes for that is like our famly.

I have a sorry spot in me for what past today. Luigi—you know the man of fruits and potaytoes who was friend to my father—came to see me but he never because the maid called the same teacher that ran behind me the day I loped with Luigi back to the sylum because the girls put tayboo on me. That teacher has bad ideahs of Luigi that are no fair because Luigi didnt stand for lopes atall but she wouldnt let him make more talk in the door but shut it tight.

The class poet name Dolly was sent to the office for wispering which is by the door so she heard all. She is a real poet because she cant help it no more than a fitty orfun we had once at the sylum she ran the maytrun most crazy. Dolly had to write the poetry on Venusses back or she said it woulda been lost to the world and what a pity. Venus is a little white

"Little Sister in Cage of Gold"

saint in the office. Dolly has a nawty way not respeckfull of her betters but she says when she acts like badness it is only jeenyus in the fire. Here is the poetry. I dont like it for not respeckfull of Luigi.

The Daygo shook his earings gold
And begged he might the child behold
The Teacher froze him with her glasses
Sir you keep me from my classes
Avaunt thou son of garlick do!
Giovanna flys too high for you!

P. S. Dolly says such was not the words of that teacher but you cannot write the true in poetry or it will not stand right on its ends.

O I have a fraid Luigi will believe I am grown hawty and how could I when I would be a whole orfun in the sylum this minute just the same like I was if you hadnt took me out by your love.

Your ownest ownest

Giovanna.

The Heart of an Orphan

Dear Mother Mother Dear,—

I guess it was God who got me sent to the office not for badness but 3 pencils. The Principle said listen Giovanna all days that old fruit peddler friend of yours makes one same song up to this school when he goes by on his waggon. I listened and shook and shook for it was Luigi and he made no song but only to play sing in Daygo talk "I know where is one little bird name Isabella in cage of gold." He did that way to tell me because he got such scare on that teacher he hadnt dare to ring the bell. I beg the Principle please xcuse all shakes because Isabella usto be my sister and she was a little brunet beauty and a kind lady took her for her own.

The Principle sent the maid quick to run behind Luigi which she done and he had a fraid to whoa but he did and sat on the big black chair in the office and the Principle was not hawty but treated him grand like he was a payrent of this school.

“Little Sister in Cage of Gold”

Luigi tell of sell the orange and the apple in one street of rich. He tell one house most big and wide and high and wonderfull. He tell the curtains like vail of Virgin in church of Italy where his madre do kiss that vail in its corner. He tell one little miss come put back curtins with her hands to look—little miss dressed in pink silk all ruffledy like biggest doll in Christmas window. Little miss got long black curls and face of Isabella. No he not make catch the mistake for didnt he see her since bambina to play with his own bambinas? Was he old to have eyes of blind beggar? No it was Isabella—he say Isabella till he die and no mistake. Then Luigi went away.

The Principle said Giovanna Saterdag a teacher will take you to see your sister. I answer that cannot be for the kind lady wished her to forget me and all her past. She will never let me in. The Principle said real hawty but not at me “you got a

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Bennyfactor now good as her and a teacher of this school will company you. That is enough."

So I went back upstairs and the teacher said where are the pencils? I answer please what pencils? The teacher saw my looks and she thought I was sick but I wasnt. It was just my thinks of Isabella jumping round in me. Soon we were dismissed and I ran quick here to my room to tell you all.

Today is Wensday and I got to live Thursday and Friday before I can get to Saterdag. For it is a rule of this school not to make visits in the middle of weeks.

O but 3 days is not so long as perhaps never and to think my darling sister is not dead in her grave like I expected. When God made the start to be good to me He dont forget a thing.

Your adoring

Giovanna.

“Little Sister in Cage of Gold”

Angel Mother of my life,—

It is my joy that to-morrow is Saterdag when a teacher will take me to visit Isabella. Can my little sister forget me in one year? Can she forget how I held her on our doorstep at the tenement and how I made curls on her and washed her dress and licked any kid that would teeze her and ate myself the most spoiled sides of apples which Papa gave us that could not sell? He was a man of fruits like Luigi but more stile for he had a stand and no waggon. Can she forget how she slept with me and the bannannas and I all times put more blankit to her and not to me? But if she has gone and forgot all I will not have mean feels at her because she was little.

But O Mother the Eggsloosifs all say that kind lady was crule and selfish to separate 2 sisters like she done and its the true. She was jellus that Isabella would love anybody else but her. Now perhaps my baby sister has gone and lost her love for

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me out of her heart and all by the fault of that kind lady. The priest says on Sunday that hate is wicket but I cant help to hate hate hate her hard and fierce. If she has woe I care not for look at the woe she made to me. I didnt ask her to adopt me the long brown old thing nobody could want but you and I dont know how you did but I begged her only to let me see Isabella 2 or 3 X in a year because God put her to me for a sister but she wouldnt. I have no sure she will let me in for I know her hawty and jellus as she is but she cannot help I should walk by her house and look for Isabella at the window. But I hope in no window to see that kind lady for the hate I got on her.

Now I will shut her out of my head and only keep in my thoughts of Isabella.

It is bedtime but my eyes dont want to sleep for my thinks of Isabella and they do too so I can get quicker to Saturday. When I say my prayers and my goodnight

"Little Sister in Cage of Gold"

to you by my bed I will say also goodnight
my baby sister in cage of gold. I love
down to Isabella Mother like I love up to
you. I pray God will not let her feckshun
for me get lost out of her.

Your O so happy Giovanna.

Only Mother of my Soul,—

We found the place me and the teacher.
It was a palace that house but O mother
by the front door was big bow of black. I
know what means black bows for we had
them all times in our famly not so big but
25 dolars is no cheap funrals and must
make stile for the naybors and the man
takes the bow the minute the cawfin is gone
out of the door but for funrals of 15 dolars
he wont lend his bow to nobody.

I shook and shook and say I might a
known Isabella would be dead for my fam-
ily is like that but the teacher answer it
would not be so black and big for a child.
I said no she was little and curly and I

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felt some better but queer for it is sorry anybody must die. The teacher rang the door bell and the maid came and her eyes were pink with weeps. She told that the lady didnt want to see nobody because she was dead. The teacher asked could we speak to the child Isabella and the maid said no she was asleep after much crys but she let us in a room by the door with gold chairs and talked like wispering.

She told how Isabella was to that lady her apple in the eye and never did she want the child one minute not by her side and Isabella was all times fechshunate with her and sweet in her temper. The lady bought her clothes always to put her beauty in other dress like a doll. The little girl sing like bright angel up in the sky and the lady have every day expensif teacher of voice to come. Upstairs was big room of prettys just for her to play and the lady usto take her to stores and when Isabella point her

“Little Sister in Cage of Gold”

finger to anything it got bought awful quick.

O Mother the shame I felt in me to think of my wicket hate and her so good to put Isabella like a princess in the green book you gave me.

The maid spoke more to wisper as she tell how the lady went dead in the night when Isabella didnt know and in the morning she which her name is Vicktoria led the child to look fairwell and Isabella cry and cry with grief and kiss her Bennyfactor and beg her to wake up and speak but the lady couldnt for she was dead. Then Vicktoria took Isabella away and she cry very much but now she sleep her nap and forget her woe.

The teacher said “letersleep.” She said also “This girl is her sister name Giovanna.” The maid looked surprised like she seen a booger man in the dark. She tell how she got some words the lady gave

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her for me before she died. "Vicktoria find that girl of hungry eyes sister to my Isabella and beg her forgive a selfish woman who was so lonesome she wanted some person to love her most and not love worse a sister or anybody."

I chokt and chokt and reached for my hanky. I said "O tell her for me—" but what was the good to say anything with the black bow on the door and her deadn-gone? The teacher said better for us to go now and we so went.

Mother I wish you could hold me on your lap tonight like I was little as Isabella. I got such shame on my hate of my sister's good Bennyfactor seems as if it will burn me up. O if I could just beg her please excuse my nawty hate all gone! Look Mother how I hated these darling Eggsloosifs at first. But this is worse for the Eggsloosifs are not deadngone.

Now Isabella is back to orfun and I spose they will send her again to the sylum.

“Little Sister in Cage of Gold”

She must have forgot all her orfun ways like ugly dress and no cake and nobody to call dear on you. It will be better than for her little hands to reach for breakfast in cans of garbige but she will not have those thinks of comfort. She will have thinks instead of the princess she was in the house of her Bennyfactor. I have a fraid she will die of grief and different. Mother I know in my consents what I ought. It is to go and be her in the sylum so she can come here and be me. That is my duty. I am a mean selfish pig sister if I dont and her so little and tender and no more ust. I can stand to give her my shiny bed of brass and my deserts and my duster razen tailer soot. I can stand to give her the Eggsloosifs dear though they be to me and Dolly my precious chum and the teachers and the Principle. But when I think to give you to Isabella, Mother of my heart, O how can I do that? All of me just holds tight to you and dont want to let go never!

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Please write very quick and say your good thinks what I must do and perhaps by that time I wont mind quite so awful.

I know God dont want no prayer tonight out of any person wicket like me to hate that Bennyfactor lady so I will make none.

Giovanna of the bad heart.

Wonderfullest Mother in the big world,—

Today I was doing my practice and to think how that piano is full of scales and will the postman bring your darling letter and when can I see Isabella. The maid came and said company in the recepshun room and I told her Mary you mean another girl because companys I never do have in my long life but she said Miss Giovanna it is 2 company to ask for you. So I went.

O the feelings that did jump in me when I see it was Isabella with Vicktoria! My sister is longer in the legs and curls. Her dress black for sadness but plenty of stile

"Little Sister in Cage of Gold"

and no hanky pinned on. Vicktoria was dressed in sadness also. That is a way of richness. Poorness is just as sorry to lose a piece of the famly but must cry in same dress red or pink except to borrow of nay-bors black vails and skirts not to shame the dead one at its funeral.

I looked and looked and Isabella looked and looked. Vicktoria said Miss Isabella kiss your sister and she did very polite and we looked more and more. A teacher came and said the children need lonesome for break the eyes. Giovanna take her to your room which I done.

We never did break our eyes like that teacher said but we made the start and Isabella let me hug her like crazy and she was glad and loved me the same like she usto. I showed her your picture and told her of your goodness and she said that was just like her Mama and her pretty face all fussed up to weep but I kissed her and talked her back past the sylum to the

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doorstep of the tenement and she remembered how a mean kid squoze his orange in her eye on purpose and how I whailed that kid and she laughed. She did not want to go so soon with Vicktoria but Vicktoria said it was time.

I never knew how anybody could make wills for people to mind when that person is deadngone. That Bennyfactor lady make a will about Isabella to go to a school in other city where the Principle of that school usto be girls with her and that Isabella have lessons to sing and bynby sail to Italy for the best. So Isabella will be some lost to me again but not bad for now we can have stamps.

And O Mother Mother, I have no duty to give you to Isabella and go back to the sylum! I got a glad in me big as a house for that! I have no duty not to be the same

Long brown Giovanna of your heart.

THE MERRY CHRISTMAS OF GIOVANNA

*M*OTHER of my thankful heart,—

Yesterday was Thanksgiving and the Principal said in chapel for us to count our bennyfits up to God. That was easy like anything because when he gave you to me seems like he said “Giovanna, here is all your bennyfits in one package.”

Our school turkey was big as a little ash barrel and the dinner so many courses it was like a week of meals tied together.

I fell awake in the middle of Thankful Night and first believed me to be back in the sylum for the many girls in white nightys. But when I saw those nightys all embroidery and my shiny bed of brass and one girl to toast marshmallows on the steam heat I knew the difference and was

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glad. Dolly my poet chum now rooms with me by both our wish. Dolly stood on her bed making her arms act like the priest's and whispered a speech most out loud to say she had been taken with an idea in her sleep very grand even noble.

The Eggsloosifs laughed much and whispered "Here! here!" and sat on our beds and floors to listen and passed chocky-let creams. Only one was sleepy and said pickle that idea but the rest put shame and pillows on her. I asked "Dolly, is it a new poem?" and she answered "no but better for a poem is just litterytüre and this idea is all true izem." I asked "What's izem Dolly?" but she never explained. She made more speech but low for teachers wake easy. She said there is us pampered darlings of our doting parents and there's orfuns who are Miss Fortune's wafes and poor things. Her grand idea was for the Eggsloosifs to give the orfuns of the sylum a Christmas like they



"Dolly's grand idea was for the Eggsloosifs to give the orphuns a Christmas"

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never dreamed could be in this world. The girls jumped themselves up and danced in their bear feet for glad of my chum's noble idea and I never loved Eggsloosifs quite so hard as that minute.

Dolly put me in her speech to name me cyclopede of orfun lore who must understand their habits and for me to all times speak up.

One girl said the orfuns could use her tree the next day after the day after Christmas. I said did they truly want the cyclopede of orfun lore to speak up? They answered "Yes, lay on mack duff." I shook some in my bed but lay on like they said and explained how orfuns must be ever grateful for trees but all years to have Christmas not on the hollyday but after other persons have finished tastes like cold potatoes to their souls.

The girls said this must be no cold potato Christmas. They decided to beg their parents to sellybrate their presents at home

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Christmas Eve and to let them eat early Christmas Day so as to fetch the orfunns to the school before dark and all so promised except one girl that lives far off in the geography.

Another girl said "Lets give the orfunns turkey dinner before the tree," but some complained so many relaysheuns wait for presents they could not put that much allowance onto orfunns.

But an Eggsloosif named Bessie made to answer "Lets ask the Principal if we have no deserts on our dinners from now to Christmas perhaps she will give us turkey dinner for the orfunns."

The girl of sleepy replied "That is easy now to say when we have just finished mints pie and plum pudding and cake and ice cream and raisins and nuts all in one Thankful dinner but a month of no deserts would be terrible and must reduce us all to skinnybone." The other Eggsloosifs made laughs on her and more pillows and said

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no deserts was alright with them for or-funs' sake.

Dolly poeted when she never knew she was going to.

“Dear cyclopede of orfun lore,
O wont you please to tell us more?”

So I told how the presents of orfuns are most times the same for all. You look at your present and then 3 or 4 dozen orfuns hold the same in their hands and if you let go of it you can tell no more if it is really that one except yours was not broken and the one you now got is so.

The Eggsloosifs had serious looks on them and said all gifts must be different. They sang to me Dolly's poetry.

“Dear cyclopede of orfun lore,
O wont you please to tell us more?”

So I told that if not the same then orfun presents must be already busted prettys of richness. In my sylum Christmas one

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time I got a doll like I prayed by my bed very beautiful except she missed one foot and one hand and one eye and a crack in her cheek. I tried to think onto her all that was missed but I never could so I played instead how she had been whaled by a cruel father but was now a whole and adopt by me to love better for her misseds and whales.

Dolly hugged me and all promised no gifts must be busted and sang Dolly's poetry at me again to speak up more.

I answered "This next is too much for orfun but O the ache I usto have in me for a present tied in tisshoe paper with a red ribbon! I ached and ached and ached for that like a pain to take medicine with a spoon for cure."

All exclaimed tisshoe paper with red ribbon must be wrapped round the gifts like for relayshuns or anybody.

I said I must wear my orfun clothes for them not to see me that usto be orfun

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now in dress of richness. Dolly made her arms act like 6 priests for telling all to wear orfun dress same as me and look like wholes. The Eggsloosifs cried "Q lets! lets! lets!" and the girl who lives far in the geography said she would write her family to let her stay and have cold potato Christmas at home after all had finished so she could wear a sylum dress.

But I said that is no fair because orfun want to stare at pretty clothes and not come here to see like their own selves in the lookinglass.

Dolly was taken with another idea so big it made her most crazy—that was to put the pretty clothes on the orfun's backs to keep. She asked me how many orfun and I answered I believed the orfun to be about the same thickness of Eggsloosifs and she declared one girl must dress one orfun perhaps not new but good and pretty.

All got excited and forgot teachers and the Principal opened the door in a keemono.

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Dolly disappeared under the blanket but her head was wrong way round to her feet on the pillow.

The Principal went to look haughty but her eyes laughed and the girls begged her in which she came and they told her all. She said we might make Christmas for orfuns and econymze by no deserts for orfun turkey but now to bed and not catch our deathycolds which all so done very happy.

It is my turn to practice scales on the piano so I will say goodbye, darling bennyfit Mother of me.

Giovanna.

Angel Christmas present Mother,—

We have so much orfun business in this school we almost cannot do our practice and lessons. The girls all secured easy the dresses but now have much trouble to find the right orfun which fits in the dress. All Saturdays go committys of Eggsloosifs to the sylum for measuring orfuns but

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just with their guess not to spoil the surprise.

Dolly begged her dress off an Aunt with a little girl cousin. It is navy blue silk deckrated with ruffles so her orfun must be 7 like the dress. She picked out a whole named Lizzie to fit it fine so that is not her grief and woe but it comes of asking Lizzie what she wants for presents and Lizzie begged "O please a Mama and a Papa." Dolly has that kind of heart to promise first and then wonder if she can so now she's got to anyway and it puts her most crazy. If Lizzie could just be the pretty kind but her compleckshun is pale trimmed with freckles and her teeth are some gone and not grown in yet. Her hair is red pigtales. Her nose skwints up a little but not enough to notice much and she has a good blue eye and a feckshunate dishpishin. Dolly names her hair tisshen but the Eggs-loosifs laugh and say no, plain carrots. They all times advise Dolly to raffel her

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off at the tree with tickets but my noble chum will ever answer "Heethen creatures! raffel off your own orfun's if you want to but my Lizzie never do I raffel! I will find her sootybell parents or adopt her myself."

It's a tight secret only Dolly lets me tell just you she's got the parents of Lizzie all picked but they don't know it yet and Dolly has awful scares to imagine how they will act when the news gets broke on them. It is an Aunt and Uncle not the one she begged the dress off of but another named Winnyfred and John with no child and rich like anything. Dolly makes little tacks on their hearts like to say "What is home without an orfun?" But her Uncle will ever answer "When orfun comes in at the door piece flies out of the window" which is a mistake for Lizzie is not the kind to break the window like Dolly's Uncle thinks.

This does not discourage my poet chum.

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She has a skeem to fix all Christmas night at the tree. The Eggsloosifs will invite their relayshuns and the halves their whichever they got lefts and the maytrun will company the wholes. Dolly says anybody must give thanks for presents and never look like it is not the best thing they want in the big world so she will give Lizzie to her Aunt and Uncle for a present and them to Lizzie for a present and all live happy ever after and three off her list. I tell Dolly a present can be no fair like a lady in our tennymment O awful poor and a daygo organist made a present to her little boy of a sick monkey that must all days eat cream and bannannas. Dolly says the cases are different but she will ask the Principal so I may be satisfied.

Mother I had to choose the orfun of big mouth and little sense because nobody else could like her looks and ways but I know what feels you have to be that kind no person wants. She is most my size and will

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fit in my plain brown rainy dress or my red silk. The Principal says in chapel "mind your consents" so I asked mine which dress? One consent says "Shame Giovanna selfish pig girl, think how that orfun put her finger to that red silk dress at the sylum the day it was bought and said 'pretty pretty' and now with that dress on her she will be happy up to the sky and believe she is an angel." And then another consent will speak "Ungrateful one to give away the so beautiful dress of red whistling silk the first bought you by your darling Bennyfactor Mother that whistles all the time of her! What can it whistle to that orfun of big mouth and little sense?" Now Mother what do I make with those consents? Our letters must go far so it will be done before I get your advice to tell what consent I shall mind.

O if you could visit me that would be my Christmas present of the whole world but

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you say that cannot happen. I will try and not make too much sadness to myself for that because when I am your daughter every day is Christmas for my thinks of you.

Giovanna.

Mother of my Christmas heart,—

There stays just your me tonight in this school of many girls. All the Eggsloosifs sellybrate Christmas Eve at home except her that lives far in the geography and she went to Dolly's tree not to notice home-sick aches in her soul like she got simp-tums.

Dolly invited me so hard she most got mad on me not to go but I never could for lonesome. Here I have no lonesome but glad instead because you said in your preciouset letter of all that this Eve I could know you were writing to me. Last Christmas I was mixed with many orfunis but felt like sollytude. This Christmas I

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got such company as nobody ever had that together we write to each other. Last Christmas at the sylum I received a work basket with two spools and thimbel but no surprise for they were all on the maytrun's bed when I swept her room and no names just any basket to whatever orfun. The maytrun named me ungrateful to cry but Mother how could Christmas be glad when my surprise was lost?

I usto not think so much of Santa Claus as some to treat richness all times better than poorness but I learned off a kid on our doorstep at the tennymment that there isn't any. So its no fair to blame a person who never was anybody and I believe a really truly Santa Claus would act like his photograf looks and not forget the stockings of poorness—

The s of poorness has the long tale because in that minute the maid knocked with a bundle for me. This is my thoughts to open that box. O! O! O! O! O! O! O!



"O the teeny gold watch with G on it"

The Merry Christmas of Giovanna

To think you put in prettys for me to give to all the names in my letters. Dolly will jump and dance at the nugget buckle. Luigi will put a smile on him like anything to see the yellow pipe. O Mother never before in my long life did I give a present to any person. For somebody to look on me with present looks that will be my all new joy with this first Christmas to be your daughter.

In the boxes corner stayed a little package in tisshoe paper tied with red ribbon. O the teeny gold watch with G on it in pearls and a pearl pin to fasten it on top of my heart! O Mother it never can be me that usto be orfun Giovanna to own that watch! It must be a fairy dream and I will wake up in the sylum to say "What a dream I dreamed!" Always your presents talk to me of you or look at me with your looks but this watch speaks most of all not to stop in day or night or get tired. I say to it "Little angel watch she is the

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Mother of my—" And that watch so smart ticks back "heart, heart, heart, heart." No other watch could be smart like this of pearly G and teeny golden hands.

O but it makes me feel twice as dreadful about your Christmas present you won't get from me for an awful long time like next summer. If you are thinking this minute I forgot your present that is not the true but despare and most wear out my brains that is the true and now what looks like no gift.

I was going to buy you a pretty with the money you sent for a swetter but the Principal said in chapel to take the money of your parents to buy them gifts what love in that? Give them what costs you effort and self denial. And she talked more to say never give debty presents just because you owe them or hopeful presents to get one back. Dolly raised her hand

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and asked "What if somebody needs a present which they don't want?" The girls giggled to guess she meant Lizzie. The Principal replied "Decide that yourself with love and tact. Young ladies you are dismissed to your classrooms."

Dolly says love and tact and the Principal and a quarter which fell heads up are all on her side to give Lizzie to her Uncle and Aunt at the tree. She made a poem for her parents out of her own poetry but I cannot poet for you Mother because it must fall on one out of the sky or its no good. A musical girl dedycated her parents many staffs full of tunes but I could only make you some scales what are notes upstairs and downstairs and that would be no present. A very smart girl in lessons was to give her prize if earned which made me worse despare for many girls shorter in their skirts are longer than me in their grades which must put shame on

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you and the prize for spelling is past my hope so how could I think to earn a prize except for stupid and faults?

Friday was the last day of this school turn, and the Principal gave out the prizes with many cheers from all and her of smartness earned the one for grammar which was a poetry book. At last the Principal said there was one more prize to decide by vote of all the girls which pupil had got most better in manners by trying hard. O Mother that prize was given to me and not by fair because no other girl here was ever orfun so I had the head start in backness. I was so scared I almost could not hold out my hand and to walk back to my seat I did not know where it stood with the Eggsloosifs to clap clap their hands so much. By and by when I opened the package the Principal asked me why I look so disapointed. I answered "It is very beautiful and never did I earn it but what can my Mother make with a Girl's

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Memory Book of School for a Christmas present?" She explained that if I wrote it full of memorys for you Mother it would be a piece of real daughter present same as Dolly's and the musical girl's and her of smartness. But it is my grief and woe you will not get it in time for Christmas because I cannot write in it memorys that are not to happen yet but must wait till they happen.

I have decided to give away my red silk dress because my Christmas consent says "Giovanna you got such lots and that orfun so little." O my little darling watch! It now ticks "You got to stop, you got to stop" because the electric will be off in one minute and so goodnight Darling Mother from little watch and me.

Giovanna.

Mother of my Merry Christmas Heart,—

The candles are just blown out on the orfun tree and I took a pink one not much

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burnt to put in the teeny silver candlestick Dolly gave me so I can write to you after electric is off. I believe this candle likes to burn itself up for that because it waves round its little flame as if to speak "Giovanna remember me to your Mother."

The Eggsloosifs all rushed back today quick as possible after their deserts to dress themselves orfun style. Such laughs never were heard in the real kind. Then came the jenuine orfun and O the looks on them to behold the immitashun orfun! That orfun which usto make tall her pompydoor with the maps out of her geography said if she had known she was invited just to other sylum she never woulda come.

The Eggsloosifs took each one her orfun to her room and dressed her all sweet and pretty and stylish like a girl of richness with two parents. One orfun said to her Eggsloosif "I thank you but keep this dress to your own self because you look worse

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poor than me.” And the father of that Eggsloosif is a 1000000air.

Mine which was her of big mouth and little sense all times touched the red silk with her finger and repeated “My red dress, my red dress” like my watch ticks and I was glad to see her love it that hard.

Dolly’s Lizzie turned not pretty but so Dolly named her quaint and said that was more distinggay. Lizzie asked “Will my new Mama like me better in this dress?” And Dolly kissed her and pinned a card on her “Merry Christmas to dear Aunt Winnyfred and Uncle John from Dolly.” But Lizzie never saw Dolly wring her hands to me on the quiet to show what scares she got on herself.

Mother when all was finished the orfuns made immitashun Eggsloosifs like the Eggsloosifs made immitashun orfuns—I guess because the Eggsloosifs in dress of poorness acted like fixed grand for a party

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and the orfuns could not forget so quick their scroocht down feelings even in dress of richness.

Next was the turkey dinner with the orfuns in the chairs and the Eggsloosifs to act like maids. All their swallows could work fine and they were very satisfied except Lizzie teased to sit between her Mama and Papa but Dolly told her they were not yet come.

After turkey dinner all went to the big hall of the Christmas tree and there stayed the parents and relayshuns and which-ers. Dolly looked so pityfull for her feelings on Lizzie a kind old man thought she was a jenuine and tried to give her a dollar in her hand but she explained no thank you.

The janitor played he was Santa Claus and passed the presents and O the joy and surprise of those orfuns most paralyzed them. I gave mine a doll because her sense is younger than she is and it seemed

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as if she couldn't hug it enough and I was glad.

But poor little Lizzie looked like weeps and said to Dolly "Where is my Mama and Papa like you promised?" My chum led her pretty near to her Uncle and Aunt where they sat and whispered to Lizzie which they were and ran to hide behind the tree. Lizzie stept close and close till Uncle John said "Whose little girl are you?" and she answered "I am yours, Papa," and the surprise that Uncle had on him was wonderful. Aunt Winnyfred spoke "What nonsents! Run to your Mama, child," but she answered "You are my Mama."

Uncle John looked on her card and exclaimed "O that Dolly!" Aunt Winnyfred explaned to Lizzie how she did not want a little girl and all was mistake.

Lizzie got that kind of disapoint which hurts so bad you don't cry the first minute and they thought she was satisfied but

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she fell herself down on the floor and her grief and woe were dreadful and she all times talked in her cry "O my Papa don't want me! O my Mama don't want me!"

Dolly ran to comfort her but she would take no comfort. Aunt Winnyfred stood up and spoke, "Let us go! this is very painful! Dolly you must be punished!" But Uncle John answered "Why not take her along and look her over? Anyway she said first she was mine." Aunt Winnyfred talked back "Just because you sat on that side so she came first to you." So Uncle John carried her but Aunt Winnyfred held her hand.

The little candle is most gone and so is my first merry Christmas but I got plenty of merryness this time to catch up on all I missed before.

O Mother what a long chain you started by your goodness to me. The Eggsloosifs tied some more to that chain by this wonderful surprise on the sylum; Aunt Win-

The Merry Christmas of Giovanna

nyfred and Uncle John made another piece to adopt Lizzie. And I never did a thing to make it longer but perhaps I can some day. That is my wish.

I have just one more minute to say Merry Christmas so with that I will stop my letter. Merry Christmas, Mother! Merry Christmas, Isabella! Merry Christmas, orfuns! Merry Christmas, Eggsloosifs! Merry Christmas, all the people in the big world! Merry Christmas, dear God up in heaven!

Giovanna.

GIOVANNA'S ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

MOTHER of my Italian heart,—

Such wonderful bran news I got to-day for you and me to be glad about—the teacher spoke it right out to all the class of geography. She said that Dago is just the disrespeckfull for Italian and she names Italians grand and wonderful with songs in their throats and pictures in their eyes and hands to make statyous. And Mr. Columbus who discovered America was a Dago! So Americans needn't feel set up over us because where would they be this minute if he never had? Besides they are all named after Mr. Amerigo, another Italian man who put them first on any map or they must have got omitted

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out of the geography and then think how mortifide they would have felt!

So Mother, it is not mean for me to be Dago and need not put shame on you as I always supposed it must indeed. It was my guess to myself you had hopes to erase all my Dago part in this school except my looks which are very brunetty and no powder can help that because I tried and it showed on top of my brownness like chalk on the blackboard and the Principal said "Giovanna, go wash your face; I did not believe you were that silly kind of girl." So I cried and washed hard and threw away that powder box awful quick but explained not to the Principal because it would have been like telling a secret of yours and mine, Mother, to explain and I never did. Now you don't need powder to stay on me any more.

O Mother, my proudness is up to the top of the highest mountain in the red atlas! I wish I could go and tell all the

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folks in our tenement that they are no more Ginneys but very grand and respecttable Italians and must have no shame on themselves for that but all glad and hawty.

I had thoughts of asking you to change my name to Jane but now I rejoyce to be

Your Italian daughter,

Giovanna.

Mother of my Dago heart,—

There was a reception in this school today very grand from three to five. O the surprise that happened on me right in the middle of this reception! If I gave you 1,000,000 guesses and 3 more you could not tell who came and not invited, for how could I think to invite rellytives never seen in my long life and most forgotten and also believed by me to stay in Italy shaped like a rubber boot and washed by many seas?

I was sitting some behind a screen and

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the music talked of you and my love as I never can write in my letters because it would take words I do not know. I wore my new pink silk which is that kind to try to stick to my fingers as if it says it likes to be my dress and the best beautiful sign of your love.

Dolly came and pulled me by the hand to the window quick as we could go for the many ladies not to step our feet on their elegant trains. There stayed Luigi on his wagon full of oranges and bananas. An Italian woman sat by him not his wife for I know her looks and a girl about my bigness. Down in front of the seat was a boy not so big and another girl not so big as the boy and another girl with curls not so big as that girl and a baby in the Italian woman's lap which she gave Luigi to hold while she clum out and pulled down all the rest except the boy who jumped himself off and stufft two bananas in his shirt not seen by Luigi. Then Luigi

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pointed with his whip to the door of our school and drove away very quick like he still had scares on that teacher.

Wrinkeldy and poor was the Italian lady with a little square shawl on her head. The girl of my bigness was dressed pretty but curyous. Her black velvet corset was on top of her white waist. She wore a red skirt and an apron crost by many stripes. The toes of all the littler ones looked out of their shoes and no wraps on their thinness. I had a big sorry for them in my heart.

Then Dolly was called by her Mother to play a piece on the piano for some person in the music room.

Very soon that family off Luigi's wagon stood in our hall and all stared at them like they were brickyards and not people. I had no dream who they could be, but Dago must ever go to Dago so I went.

When I walked close to her of the wrin-

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keldy face and little shawl, she screecht "Giovanna! Mia cara! Mia cara!" and hugged me long long in her arms and many times kissed my cheeks and hugged me more and more and tears ran down in her wrinkles.

I let her hug and kiss me, Mother, but I shook and shook and wished not to be so much kissed with all to stare and stare as they done. Nobody hugs like that in receptions which are not any good form place for jenuine feelings like hers but just touch your fingers and talk politeness. The feelings that Italian lady had on me were terrible and I could not understand what for with this the first time I ever walked in her sight.

By and by she calmed off a teeny bit and held my face with her hands and looked and looked and said she was my Aunt Maddalena.

I was embearest dreadful and sorry to make her such dizzypoint but I begged

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her please excuse me not to be her niece and her not to be my Aunt Maddalena.

The girl of my bigness had eyes black and looks proud like anything. She spoke American but slow and funny and full of try as if her tongue could just walk and not run.

“Why notta your Aunt?”

I answered “It is the true that my Mama who died had a sister named Maddalena and she usto tell me how they cried and hugged much when my Mama started for America in the big ship, but this lady never can be my Aunt.”

That girl asked again, “Why notta your Aunt?”

I explained just like my Mama that died usto tell me plenty of times. “My Aunt Maddalena is so beautiful in looks that artiss men make her picture with many paints. Nobody in her village can dance the tarantella like my Aunt Maddalena;

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any person will travel a mile and be glad to see the steps of her teeny feet. She wrote a letter how she marrys my Uncle Nicolo who sings long songs and walks on the grapes to make them wine. By and by she wrote another letter that she has a baby girl, cousin to me named Concetta. Then no more letters or else lost. Now you understand why this Italian lady is all mistake and no Aunt."

That girl spoke again awful proud.

"Little fool! Can she no getta old? When young she was moddle for artiss men and this dress I wear now is her moddle dress because my dress gotta the holes. Your Uncle Nicolo no come to-day, he hunts the work. You think that baby girl Concetta no getta big never? I am Concetta and this is your Aunt Maddalena."

Then I believed she spoke the true and I was more embearest like I would die with all my thinks tip side up and no

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chance to get them fixed. My voice came out of me little and funny.

"I am very pleased to meet you."

"Notta so!" said Concetta awfuller proud. "You no wanta us! One year in America we look look ask ask for you. Now I wish we never hadda found you! You gotta the shame of us and I hate you!"

I did not answer that Concetta but I led them to chairs which were very quick plenty when they walked near. It is the rule not to just have your own talk with your rellytives at a reception but you must make presents to them of your schoolmates. I did not mind that rule, Mother because of the feelings I had for the Exclusives to look on my cousins so wretcheddy and my Aunt Maddalena all poor and wrinkled up. I was trying to swallow down my cry when our dear Principal came and saylooted my rellytives fine and polite as if they were the best in elegant trains

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instead of short in the skirts and big in the shoes as my Aunt, only Concetta hid her hands under her apron crost by many stripes. What sort of manners was that?

The boy begged me, "Swipe a feller some cake. Say, do you guys have ice-cream?" I made the start to get him some but Concetta said, "Notta swipe—better he starve first," so I sat still and swiped not.

I wanted to make good from talk with my rellytives but it was skarce in me. Pretty soon Concetta said to her Mother in Italian that no longer must they put shame on Giovanna with her grand friends so they went and fine riddants to that Concetta.

O Mother, what is the good to call Italians grand and wonderful and then all to stare at them like brickybacks when they stand in your hall? How can they have that glad the teacher says they may for the songs in their throats and the

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pictures in their eyes and their hands to make statyous when they got those scroochtdown Dago feelings on themselves (not counting Concetta) and you got the same on them to be their rellytives? My Italian proudness is all spoiled.

Your unhappy

Jane.

Dearest and Best,—

I am writing to you in my cloak and my hat is still on my head because my feelings fizzed and fizzed all the way home from the call on my Italian rellytives and will not stay shut up in me one more minute.

All days I felt as if there was a string on my soul and Aunt Maddalena was pulling it and I knew Dago must go to Dago. The Principal said a teacher might company me this afternoon which she so done.

O Mother, rellytives are no good but to make grief and woe! I wish mine were

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back in Italy like a rubber boot washed by many seas, I do indeed. No, I would save out Aunt Maddalena because love is sprouting in my heart for her and how she does not look all homely as at first. And the baby with eyes like chockylet creams, it is a dear baby. Giuseppe is a newsy and newsys are ever desprit characters and usto pull my braids, but Giuseppe has not done it yet and he has a hello grin on him so you got to like him anyway and I do not wish away my cousin Giuseppe. Marietta next to Giuseppe is very good and quiet and pityful to be so thin and pale and nobody could wish her away. Assunta between Marietta and the baby has long black curls and dimples, and I ached to hug and hug her but I never could for the eyes of Concetta kept me all friz up on my bench so I sat still and hugged not.

Aunt Maddalena would have embrased me the same as at the reception but Con-

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cetta had to put in her Italian talk "Have care, little Mother, for the fine clothes of our grand lady cousin."

All the time of this visit I felt as if my heart was a pincushion and every word of Cousin Concetta stuck another pin in that cushion for the hate she got against me. She asked me in her own talk why I brought that teacher to show her how poor they live. Was it not enough for me to know it myself and come where I was wanted by nobody?

They are terrible poor, Mother, and live way upstairs in the back tennymment with no window to look on the street but just at clothes-lines and for furniture some big and little benches such as my Uncle could make with boards loose from the back fence if he got them first and not the neighbors to burn and a little old busted stove and a bed very ricketty and the plaster to fall off in many spots.

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They must take coats home to finish just for some cents each one. Aunt Maddalena sewed like **crazy** and Concetta the same hard and fierce and Marietta pale and pityful must sew and little Assunta pulled the bastings and minded the baby. She cried to go sit on the doorstep and Aunt Maddalena shook her, not for mad but because tears would drop on that coat of fine cloth and ruin them all.

Uncle Nicolo is a man of ditches in America because we walk not on our grapes to make them wine, and when he cannot get ditches to dig he is out of work which is dreadful and all must finish more coats. He walked in at the door and I saw him for the first time ever. He bowed polite to the teacher and me and shook our hands. He did not laugh nor sing long songs nor take his piccolo out of his pocket as my Mama that died said he had those habbits but sat on a bench with his head

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to hang down in front and his hands to fall between his knees.

The teacher spoke with him very friendly and he told her O if he had fifty \$ to buy a fruitstand of an Italian man who must take his poor sick wife back to Italy to die in the arms of her old Mother, then the family could live fine and not finish the coats. After telling this Uncle Nicolo fell back into his sorry thinks and talked no more.

Giuseppe was gone to sell his papers, the teacher could not speak all the time about nothing, Aunt Maddalena in English can only smile and smile, the little girls were too bashful and the baby too young and Uncle Nicolo too sad and Concetta too mean to talk so nobody did.

By and by Aunt Maddalena begged me to tell of my Mama that died and all our family, but I have lost the habbit to speak Italian and was afraid to say it funny

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and full of mistakes for Cousin Concetta to laugh so I answered "Aunt I cannot."

Then Concetta went and made this lie, "Little Mother, our grand lady cousin has forgot she was ever poor like us. Do not make her the pain to remember."

O Mother, that was mean and mean and mean! I hated Concetta to say that lie of me, so I begged the teacher please let us go and we went.

I will never go back to see them any more—I'm all finished up with them forever and forever world without hen!

Goodbye Aunt Maddalena, dear Aunt no more ugly but good and sweet. Goodbye Giuseppe of the hello grin. Goodbye poor little Marietta so pityful. Goodbye Assunta with the Isabella looks and curls. Goodbye baby of the big eyes like chockylet creams. Goodbye Uncle Nicolo. I hope you get plenty of ditches to dig and can buy that fruit stand. I

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do indeed. Goodbye Cousin Concetta with your manners like snow to freeze me and your words like mustard to burn me.

Mother darling, I feel some unfizzed and I just have time to put away my hat and coat before the supper bell.

Goodbye from

Jane.

Dear Mother,

Your letter hurt fierce and awful but I guess it's what the Principal calls a mer-ryted reebuke. You say you have no daughter Jane and want none of that name if my last letters are her kind to write. You tell the great dizzypoint you got in me to be so snubbish and your surprise that I can so quick forget the feelings I usto have in my soul when the Exclusives were hawty with me the same. O how you put big big Selfish on me to fuss all times at my own mortifide and not consider the mortifide of my rellytives at the

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reception to find themselves such differents. In the call also you feel Scorn for me as a horrid silly Prig not to talk Italian with my dear Aunt. And my Mama that died—how dreadful she must have felt to lean over in her Heavenly seat and see me act like that to her used-to-be-beautiful sister and I guess God has His oppinion of me too.

The repentants I got on all the family is big as a house but it don't reach to my Cousin Concetta—no ma'am it don't! Her I must ever hate as she does me and she made its start when I never did. Last night I had trouble with my prayers all on account of her. This morning when I woke I felt as if I had caught meazles in my soul for my thinks of her.

Yes, ma'am, I will go spend the whole Saturday to visit those rellytives I thought never to see again in my long life but Dago must go to Dago and that's the true. Yes, ma'am, I will help finish the coats.

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Yes, Mother, to please you, I will love that Cousin of my bommylation just this Saturday, since you say that on Sunday I have your permission to hate her again if I can't help it.

This is your first time to scold me, Mother, and it felt like spans on my soul, but O you put such love and forgiveness at the end and now to be all confessed and promised up, why I feel more daughterish than ever.

Your never-more Jane
But always
Giovanna.

Mother of my happy love,—

On Saturday morning the Principal was to shop herself a new dress but she took me first to the house of my Aunt. They were terribly busy. This time the coats belonged to boys and all must sew sew like crazy to get finished that day for the

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rent. Poor little Marietta most fell off her bench with sleepy because all had sewed in the night. Giuseppe was gone to sell his papers and Uncle Nicolo to hunt his ditch to dig with little hope for ditches are scarce and many beg for shovels.

I said "Concetta, today I love you, give me a coat to sew." She tost her head and mocked me back. "Very kind the grand lady Giovanna to love her poor cousin and sew a coat, very very kind! I thank you." I did not get any mad but I just thought how mad I would be tomorrow for her to speak that way. I took a coat to finish off the pile but I sewed clear through and the stitches showed and Concetta must stop and pull them out. She said awful cross "Thank you, fine lady Giovanna, for the splendid help which will put us back three coats to get over. Why don't you stay with your grand friends and let us be?"

I was much mortifide but not mad today

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or tomorrow because I had a big sorry on myself to put them back three coats by my fault.

When it was dinner time Concetta said "We have only polenta because this is the day of the rent. I fear our grand Cousin will starve."

I answered "My Mama that died usto talk of polenta how good, so polenta is all right with me." We had no tablecloth, just a big dish of polenta which is corn pudding made out of mutton. Giuseppe came and saylooted me with his hello grin but no words. O Mother, when I tasted that polenta I thought what will I do what will I do not to offend more Concetta because so fierce I did not like it that scarcely could my swallow act and besides there was not plenty for all. In that minute Giuseppe winkt his eye on my side and I slipt my share to him under the table which he ate with much joy and me the same that he should,

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Very quick was finished the polenta because it was not much and all must hurry hurry to finish more coats. I begged very humble to try again and Concetta let me most scornful but I finished one all right and felt proud but there was no time for proudness, just grab another and another. At first it was like play to try to get through quick as the rest which I could not for even Marietta would beat me by both sleeves. I liked to wonder what was the color of hair now growing on the boy whose Papa would buy him this coat but soon no more because I got a little ache in my back which spread and spread and my arms ached fierce and my feet got asleep and my neck full of cricks. The black color would come off on my hands to make them horrid and ugly. I was hungry like I would starve and all my bones were full of pains but I had shame to stop first, so it was grab another and another till it seemed as if I had to sew

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down a long long road with no end but just coats and coats until I died.

O Mother, all at once I lost my Giovanna feelings and caught Concetta feelings instead. It was as if I was not me but her all poor and tired and ever sewing and hungry and sleepy and anksyus. I could see me, Giovanna, sitting there in the good clothes of your love clean and fed up and lazy and smarty and selfish and crittykle. O Mother, I hated me and not her so fierce that I cried to think how mean I was and all times putting it on her.

Concetta got big astonish to see my cry, but said real sweet as I never knew she could "Notta more sew—you tired, no? You stop now."

Then I tried to explain and we all stopped and hugged and Concetta embraced me most of all and said I was not proud and hawty like she thought and for me to forgive and I hugged back most crazy with glad.

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Uncle Nicolo came in and Concetta begged him to play the piccolo so they might dance to sellybrate. It is a fine father who can always have music in his pocket that his children may dance. I told Uncle Nicolo how my Mama that died said the neighbors called him Mr. Piccolo instead and he laughed a little for the first time in America I guess by his looks.

Isn't it funny that my feet have not forgot the tarantella learned from my Mama that died while my head forgets many capitals of States in vacation? So Concetta and I were fine in love and danced it to each other like our Mothers usto, only Uncle Nicolo would have his sad thoughts again and forget to blow.

The Principal stood in the door and Dolly with her because Dolly had met her in a store and wanted to come. They begged and begged and coaxed and coaxed until Aunt Maddalena took her little shoes out of a chest and nobody could dance the

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tarantella like her. She looked old but danced young just as when all would walk miles to see the steps of her teeny feet.

O Mother, what do you think our dear Principal said—that her grand wonderful actress friend who visited us once at the school wants to learn the tarantella because she must dance it in a play named “Ibsen’s doll’s house” and nobody could teach her to do it like my Aunt Maddalena and the actress lady will pay Aunt Maddalena plenty of money to be taught. In that minute I got back my Italian proudness to think of that way-way-up-to-the-sky actress lady taking lessons off my Aunt.

O and Uncle Nicolo can buy that fruit stand and he was so glad he sang a long song which the Principal named grand opera. All the time he sang Dolly was scribbling with her pencil on the cuffs of my white waist but not so anybody would notice her much and then she whispered

Giovanna's Italian Renaissance

to me "Don't send my limmyricks to the laundry."

Next Uncle Nicolo played like he would break his cheeks and we all danced. Even the Principal made some whirls with Marietta.

We parted in joy and now I am home back at the school and happy happy! And I have looked in Dolly's closet but I can't find any limmyricks not to send to the laundry. I know all her clothes and she never said she wore any or what color.

Here is the poetry off my left cuff.

"There was an Aunt Maddalena
Whom Giovanna never had seena
She's wrinkled and old
But her heart is fine gold
So her looks don't count for a beana."

Here is her poetry on my right cuff.

"There was a proud Cousin Concetta
Whose eyes were black as the jetta
She seemed full of hate
But that's all a mistake
She's so darling we're glad to have metta."

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That's the true just as if it wasn't poetry, but all the rellytives in this big world dont = one precious darling Mother always first in the heart of

Giovanna.

GIOVANNA'S FIRST REMEMBERS

ANGELICKAL Mother of my glorious new times,

Such a hurry I got to put my first remembers in this letter because to-morrow we girls must fix them in compositions to oblige the Chair of Professor Sighkology who lectured to us in Assembly and I cannot make secrets with that Chair away from you who must ever be the Queen of all my deepmost thinks.

A senior said Professor Sighkology's smile was Heavenly, but Dolly answered it was so impursynal it fell down between the desks. I never noticed which way flew his smile for wondering what sort of magic Chair to read my writing and put red ink on top of my mistakes. I'd like to see it only to feel that Chair staring

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at me without eyes would be worse than the evil eye of the old shoeman—I'll tell about him when I get to his spot in my letter.

The girls are Odearing something dreadful about this composition (except Dolly who says hers will then be ready for her byography) but they don't really mind—it's just their Odear habit. Boosted up here as I am by your love and my orphan feelings not forgotten, I don't see how they can fuss and fuss at nothing, I don't indeed. But then a beggar of the street might peep in at the asylum window and hear the orphans Odear the same and say "What have those orphans all safe and fed got to Odear about?" and wonder at them just as I do at the Exclusives of this school.

No other girl here could make news to her mother of her first remembers since they had them together which we never could the ones I got now, because if I had

Giovanna's First Remembers

been your daughter from the beginning all these first remembers would have been different. Anyway no daughter could belong any fiercer than I do now, *could* they Mother? My days are trimmed up and decorated with my thinks of you. And when I tell you these remembers we will belong some more for you to know all that passed with me in my years before I sewed by your side at the College Settlement where we used to take our first start with each other.

And even if we didn't begin so early to belong, I hope we can finish up together and have our funerals the same afternoon. Sometimes I get scares in my bed to wonder if, you being older, God expects you to die first, but please live to be an aged lady and I won't mind dying some young not to be left orphan again.

How strange that Dolly and I were babies in the world at the same time and her with a nurse of white cap and apron

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to ride her in the Park and embroidery dresses and her rattle silver, so no angel could guess she would ever be chums with the brown tenement baby which grew up me. And you, Precious Mother, were in the world too and God had you waiting for me like a grand surprise hid way back on the top cupboard shelf.

Dolly read a book out of the library so her composition is very intelleckchewel. She writes about her infantyle conceps but they were too much style for a Dago tenement kid so I am very sure I had none.

O Mother, wouldn't it be fun if we could remember way far backer than we can and not forget how it feels to be teeny in laps and pull hair and talk guggy guggy? But no—we must grow to some bigness before memory sprouts in us.

Dolly's earlyest reckylection is shook in church for badness to go sit on the pulpit steps and hug and kiss her new hat with the minister up there preaching how

Giovanna's First Remembers

wicked is vanity. Can't you just see her looking dear and cute and funny like anything?

I will tell you my own very firstest remember I got. I never knew there was any me in this world until the day the saloon burned across our street. All stands in my head just like a picture only myself I cannot see though I feel I am in the middle of it and little to hold on that way to the back of the chair where my Papa lifted me up to look. He was an awful handsome man of big black mustash. I can see very plain my Mama that died and hear her prayers of scare that our house would not burn also. All the front of that picture is blazing fire close close till it seems as if I could reach it with my hands. I had not then my "dawn of conshus fear" but jumped and danced on the chair like a little crazy with joy of the big red and yellow flames.

Dolly's best scare was on a ghost which

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never skooted in at the window all white with eyes green and ringing its hands and moaning fierce to fly her off into the dark, but of nights she lay on her little bed expecting and expecting that ghost which the nurse said would come if she did not go quick to sleep, and she could not for scare of the ghost. It was all just a wicked lie of that nurse so she could run talk with her bow over the fence.

My first afraid was on that old Dago shoeman. He pozest the evil eye and always plenty of work because the neighbors had scares of what would fall on them if another should mend their shoes. He sat close to the door in his little shop where I must pass on errands to the grocery. My Mama that died hung a charm about my neck to keep off his bad looks; also she showed me how to make horns with my hand but I must hold my horny hand at my back for politeness. With the charm and horns I felt safe when I was in the



"I must hold my horny hand at my back for politeness"

Giovanna's First Remembers

house just going to start, but soon as I heard his hammer tinkly tinkly I would go slow and slow grabbing my charm and making my horns and shake and shake and whisper little prayers and creep soft on my tippy toes till I was half past and then run like crazyness.

Dolly says her scare was worse than mine because the old shoeman stayed in his shop and didn't go flopping round into windows. I told her but he was really in the world and the ghost was not, and she answers that's the eyedenticle reason for the ghost to be worst.

I never dreamed that richness living upstairs and downstairs in its house could think of anything to want and not get it and there Dolly and I had the same wish which was a new baby in the family, girl for choice. Poorness got waited on up in Heaven and richness didn't, so my going-to-be-chum Dolly had to stay an only like she was.

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I wish she could have had hers too. She needed it worse than me because I was not quite an only on account of Tony. I never noticed when he came. He was in our house not so big as I when I first thought about him. He was too big though to make a good baby and wouldn't play it anyway. All the girls my size on the tenement doorstep had babies to tend, so it was no good form to be without and I must ever play old maid which is very stupid with no children to lick. It was only nice when the hand organ would come to our block because a baby is awful heavy to dance with for several tunes while an old maid can dance all tunes very free and glad.

My best friend was named Katy. She was proud to be Irish and no Dago. Her father was a man of pollyticks who could shake hands with the alderman just whenever he pleased, and the alderman got him

Giovanna's First Remembers

a job to sweep the dirt of the streets into a great big dustpan with a long handle. Katy was so haughty for that she would not be much friends with Dago kids but with me yes, because we had the other front tenement to look on the street and lived in good style with always something to pawn when there was not money enough for the rent. So she liked me at home but not at school—there she walked at recess with her arms around the Irish and not me. But after school she was my friend again and said the rest in our tenement were ginneys and could not sit on the top step along with us.

One day when Katy got home from school she found a bran new baby in her house and she was stucker up than ever because it was a sister which is more stylish than brothers and it was blonde white with teeny gold curls like no other baby in that tenement. I was its old maid Aunt

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and must hold it most all the time while Katy was busy chasing kids off the top step.

I loved Katy's baby so fierce I had most forgotten to want one of my own when Isabella came in the night and the next morning I heard her cry in Mama's bed and was crazy glad and ran to look but such a dizzypoint fell on me for her to be little and red and blackfuzzy and Katy's baby so beautiful. O Mother, I write this with red shame on my cheeks to think of me so mean and wicked but I must tell you all even if it makes you have a black spot of dispizement for me in your soul *I tried to trade babies with Katy!* I offered her all my hair ribbons and my red beads and even my badeye charm but she said not on her sweet life for mine was the common Dago kind so if you dropped her on the steps you couldn't tell again which one she was and so little I would be getting ten pounds more baby.

Giovanna's First Remembers

God was good to me as I never deserved not to let her trade since her baby died and I would have been left without any little sister and serve me right for my evil heart. I saw that dear baby just the day before in Katy's house and I thought it not to be sick as they said with its cheeks so pink, but the next tomorrow it was dead. The Chairs asks which is your beautifullest remember and that is mine—Katy's baby lying on the table among its candles, its face all over clean at once and dressed in white embroidery like richness. It seemed as if it must wake up in surprise and reach for those teeny blue shoes such as it never dreamed on itself. The look on its face was just as though an angel was whispering creepymouse in its ear. I cried more than Katy which she said was no fair and I kissed many times its little hands like cold snow. They took it away with grand style and much weeps out loud and three carriages and a white hurse and a bouquet

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of genuine flowers bigger than it, a present from the alderman which must have cost plenty.

Isabella had grown some bigger by that time and her curls had started only they were still black and not gold. When the funeral proceshun was gone, I went again upstairs and hugged her not to be dead and cold and whispered did she forgive her wicked sister to try to trade and she guggled "yes" and I cried some more into her apron for my little Irish niece deadngone to the semitary.

Katy returned from her funeral very sad and hawty. I offered her Isabella to hold for comfort but she sobbed "no, thanks, her own or none" and she let everybody sit by her side on the top step. I saw by such politeness her heart to be broke intirely as she said it was.

Katy's family moved away pretty soon because the alderman fixed her Papa with a better job to drive a big sweep-the-streets

Giovanna's First Remembers

machine of nights and they went to a grand Irish tenement with a bathtub and foldup bed in the parlor glorybe.

I truly love this school, Mother, but not more than I loved the First-Grade in that time. It was fine to be the monitor to all the pencils in my row and the teacher's petticoat rustled grand and silken down the aisle and her smile was hardly ever off her face—just when some boy was mean. My hand would most wave itself broke to say the words on the blackboard and I loved to sing

“Twenty froggys went to school
Down beside the Russhen pool.”

I went home different ways to find that pool but none on our block was Russhen, just all Dago with men hitting little balls and no froggys to see.

You must have been the Dolly kind of little girl, Mother and O so fine and wonderful! Please please write your youth-

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fullest rememberants to me in your next precious letter. My Mama that died used to tell me about when she was a little girl in Italy. She would get glad to talk of Italy—how it is warm, fresh and light, the neighbors sing like the fountains; fig and olive trees grow thick there as the garbage cans of America. We would dance the tarantella very happy but pretty soon it would make worse her cough and then she would cry and say how cold, sad, dark and ugly is this country and all times like Good Friday. She was a very good kind of Mama and where she was that place seemed ever sweet and shiney unto me.

The curious chair wants to know how we made our first start to feel grownup. Dolly says her shoes keep climbing higher and higher up her ankels and her skirts keep falling down lower and lower. When they meet she will be a young lady.

I must have stayed kiddish forever to wait for that because my dresses not like

Giovanna's First Remembers

Dolly's would get shrinker and shrinker and my legs would grow longer and longer so my shoes and skirts must get more apart for boys at school to holler "broomsticks! broomsticks!" as I hated them to so holler.

I guess my grownup feelings sprouted in me one tragicky winter full of woe when Papa's fruit would freeze and freeze and lose him plenty of money and we got all pawned out and had to move back into an old behind tenement very dark and cold so I was glad Katy was gone not to see. The cough of my Mama that died got awful worse and no fire seemed to warm us with the little coal we had and Tony sat by the stove and wouldn't play anything but lame boy and his knee was bad but he never said it was real—only his play. It was a good thing I was eight that birthday to do the work. My Papa fixed a box by the stove and a box by the cupboard so I could reach and also put our tub on to

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wash, only Isabella always tried to fall in that tub and be drowned. I had no time for doorsteps and anyway it was too cold.

The walk-in districk nurse came every day to put a new bandige on Tony's knee and fix Mama what comfy she could. One morning I put Mama and Tony's breakfast on the box by the stove while I filled the teakettle and Tony never noticed and put his foot in it and I slapped him—my poor little lame brother with a bandige on his knee! O Mother, when he was awful sicker in the hospital I begged him to slap me back but he wouldn't, so that slap I put on Tony must stay on me till I die.

And I can't have the delishus dinner I got now in a basket and take it to Mama and Tony to make them glad. When persons are in some other place perhaps you can get there to walk enough, but you cannot walk to them in a new time after theirs is all past and finished up.

I know that winter was when I got the

Giovanna's First Remembers

habit of growing up for the nurse to say as she did "you poor little old woman!"

Then one day very sudden it was spring and warm by the sun and some grass trying to grow itself in a crack of the sidewalk and Tony went outdoors with his new crutch. That day the walk-in nurse helped me like a sick one into a pink dress terrible short with a big spot where Isabella spillt her mackyrony on me but the best I had. She led me to a beautiful house like no tenement because its rooms had not beds or stoves but pictures and prettys and many parlors which must be bigger and grander than the glorybe parlor of Katy. Some children were firing little pillows full of beans at a hole—so silly I thought and beans good to eat.

Then the walk-in nurse opened a door and that was the door to all my joy. Many girls sewed in a club and one hollered very mean "I know her—that's Giovanna Long-legs," and all laughed. My wish was to

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cry and run home, but O the wonderfulest enchantingest lady which was you hugged me with your arm and put shame on those girls and asked me did I want to sew doll rags? I was embearest dreadful but answered "no, please I am too old." Your smile was truly Heavenly as you gave me a dress to make for Isabella and put me close by your side. That was the day my love for you got planted in the ground of my heart.

But, Mother, I could not have sat there and sewed so happy if I had known God was planning all those funerals for our family. And if any angel had whispered in your ear that day how the funny little new Dago kid of the long legs would get to be your ownest ownest daughter, I think you would have told that angel "Guess again and don't be abzurd!"

Now in this letter you got me from the start and I am for keeps and keeps and keeps

Your Giovanna.

GIOVANNA AS THE WRONG PRINCESS

A DORABLEST Mother,

My times in this school get better and better and now my tiptop joy of all is that I am to act in a real play. The Principal divided us girls into program groups and my Dolly chum is writing O a gorgeous drama just out of her own thinks for our group to give next month.

First Dolly read a book from the library how to make plays, but that book only gave her much discourage and her head to ache therefore she decided youth and atmosphere are too much style for a school play and not to have them in hers. So she writes it absolutely by inspiration same as poetry only worse for long and often which is terrible. That inspiration falls on her

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in the middle of nights and just in front of dessert and once when climbing the trapeeze so she lost her hold, but on the floor stayed her play notebook and when the gym teacher came running to see how bad she was hurt, there she lay to scribble, scribble like crazy and never knew her bumps until they turned their bumpy color. O Mother, how wonderful is genius!

The Age of Dolly's play is Middle because then all persons wore costumes instead of clothes and were romantic every minute. Dolly adores romance which it is her grief and woe to be now so scarce and most extinkt. The Principal likes that time because petticoats were good form for gentlemen, so the King girl can be real modish in a red kimono trimmed by bands of cotton decorated with ink blots, and the other mail characters will keep on their long cloaks so their gym suits won't show.

Dolly can't dyvulge the plot yet because

Giovanna as the Wrong Princess

the characters are so opstreperus that whatever she writes them to do they fuss back at her to fix it all different. She says that's because, being the children of her brains, they must take after her in temperment. But we girls coaxed and teased her most crazy till she consented to give us just an introduckshun no more to those desperit tempermental characters.

Dolly will act the Right Princess as the playwrite must ever be leading lady or no fair, and I am the Wrong Princess which is the next best part for being her chum. The rest are the King, Queen, Noble, Prince of the Long Feather, Cruel Jailer, Wicked Witch, and four Hop-livelys who must be sometimes pezzents (which means not birds but the poor and humble obliged to dust with their aprons the chairs of nobility) sometimes kitchen sculpins and sometimes pop-up ghosts.

Dolly says the Wrong Princess gets taken for the real kind at first but by and

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by she is expozed and found out to be nothing but a half orphan of the Wicked Witch. Already I love my part because to be any princess whatsoever will be magnificent like I never dreamed. I try hard with my manners, Mother, I do indeed, but they are not the teeniest bit enough good for even the wrong kind of princess. I must just watch them now like cats and mice not to put shame on you by the rudeness of my princess ways. But the half orphan piece of my part I guess I will understand to act as some girl of two parents might not.

I knew a little girl in another dormitory of our asylum who was fairy once at a genuine theater and she told how in a play you are always fine and wonderful like makebelieve come true only she always wished it wouldn't be over so dreadful quick.

O Mother, I go upstairs and downstairs in all the rooms of this school so happy to

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think on my character in Dolly's drama that scarcely can my feet walk and not skippity skippity as would be no proper princess manners. I love Dolly more than I ever did, which was lots already, to see her write in her play notebook those good grand words for me to speak. It is difficult not to feel haughty when I think that a backward like me has genius for her chum.

Your joyful-up-to-the-sky
Wrong Princess.

O Mother Dear and Only Comfort,

I most wish I was an old old lady dead in my peaceful grave so Dolly would get repentants on herself for her perfiddy and she calls perfiddy on me the same when I perfiddled nothing and she all. Now we are no more chums and never can be in our long lives.

Dolly had promised, when the play was finished up, to read it first to me like a

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secret, so last night after supper I ran with her very happy to our room, and O dear! O dear! how I wish that inspiration had never dropped on her. When she began to read we were the lovingest friends and when she stopped we were the hatingest enemies.

The play makes its start with the King and Queen discovered on top of their thrones talking about their believed-to-be child, the Wrong Princess—how vile and evil is her dishpishum and how dark her looks—just like me. Her name is Zee-rooty as any girl so wicked must have her name spelled with Z to hiss like the snakes in her black heart.

The King says “Adzooks! cheer up, Mrs. Queen. This is the day the Noble Prince of the Long Feather comes to be her sooter. He will marry her away from us and good riddants to our Zeerooty.” The Queen has scares the Noble Prince

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won't like the blackness and tempers of Zeerooty and says weddings in the dark are real stylish among her set, but the king only zooks some more.

Dolly must read hard and fast to finish before the electric light would go off, so she never looked at me to know the feelings sprouting in my soul. I kept myself still and spoke not with hopes the King and Queen were some mistaken and me not to be so mean as their thinks.

Then in the play a Hop-lively announces the Noble Prince of the Long Feather who enters the stage followed by the other three Hop-livelys. When all finish their politeness, that Zeerooty comes along tagged by Dolly dressed in her white silk with a big black patch basted on its front breast to show how poor and despized she is because believed to be just the child of the Wicked Witch and given to Zeerooty for a sort of slave since the Witch has got

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everybody spelled so they don't know that Zeerooty is her own black brat and Dolly the Right Princess.

Zeerooty never notices the Prince and all those Hop-livelys though I don't see how she can help it and not be blind. She saucys her Mama Queen and kicks her Papa King on his foot. Then she discovers the Prince and has much astonish for that. She likes him fine and her manners are quick honeytaffy. She puts out her hand for him to kiss like she is the sunflower of the world, but scarcely can the Prince kiss that hand for his looks of love on Dolly.

Zeerooty perceeves those looks and goes back to acting like scandles. She throws her gloves, hat, and hanky on the floor for Dolly to pick them up and slaps her on the cheek.

O that slap was the worst ever to go from me to Dolly in her drama! It is the true, Mother, I slapped Dolly my first day

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in this school because I spilled the gravy on her and she put the name goosey to you for thinking I could get made into a lady. But that is so long past and see how we have been chums ever since the girls took the tayboo off me and now for her to go put that slap in her play when I thought it all forgiven up—O Mother, it hurt so bad I couldn't even speak that first minute like once when I caught my finger in the door.

When Dolly read on, our electric study lamp went to bobbing itself round in funny ways and throwing out long strings of light into my eyes.

In the second act, Dolly is discovered dusting and dusting those thrones and the Prince tells her how sweetysweet she is and that Zeerooty so bomitable which is the true—I could put no blame on him for that. He wants to marry Dolly instead of me and her young heart beats for him alone. Then I, which is Zeerooty come on

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and catch them in their actions. I stamp and yell so fierce all the court rush there with scares of fire. Zeerooty demands to have the Noble Prince boiled in oil with chilly sauce, mean old thing that I am! The King answers boiling a guest would be inhospitable and no good form and make war with his parents but to our lowest dunjun let him go until he can love Zeerooty and he is halled off by the Cruel Jailer while Dolly weeps into her hanky.

After that things are truly awfuller than they can be Dolly tries to rescue the Noble Prince and gets caught and dunjuned herself by the cruel Jailer, so it looks like all is over with the lovery pair. But the Cruel Jailer gets a tender spot in his tough breast and the Wicked Witch falls into her own kettle and then her spells don't work and Zeerooty is found out to be the Wrong Princess and Dolly the Right One. Dolly is let to marry the Noble Prince of the Long Feather and Zeerooty is put out the

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castle gate scratching firce all the Hop-livelys who got the job to reject her and screeching swears of "Zounds! Zounds!" like the cat vickson she is to the last and no lady!

When she finished reading, my used-to-be chum actually asked if my part wasn't just grand? I felt as a volcano when it is volcanoizing. I told her my opinion of that despizable old black snubbish Zeerooty mean as mud. I asked her what sort of mad she had kept hid away in her heart all our months of being chums that she could make me such a part to slap Dollys in her play and saucy mothers and kick fathers and boil princes like a cannible heathen?

Dolly just laughed and said Zeerooty was dandy and a real actress would know her for a splendid part.

I answered I was awear that while I might be Dago black and lean like broomsticks and used to be a slapper when I came, I was one no more but had learned

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better in this school where my Mother put me for such manners not to stay on me any more as the manners of that Zeerooty whom I hated and detested and bominated like a poison weed and never would I play myself to be her!

Then Dolly got mad at me like I already was at her, only she had no cause as she can ask her consceince and let it tell her what she did first to me—not counting that way-back slap.

Dolly exclaimed that genius never gets its dewes this side of the silentomb, so she don't expect it, but to think I could take such an ignoranty pursonal view of Zee-rooty. She asked if after she wrote special for me that almost starry part did I really refuse to be it?

I answered "Yes, I refuse forever and ever and all the time after that to be Zee-rooty." Dolly said "This breaks the chain which binds us" and I spoke back that chain to be already busted when she read

Giovanna as the Wrong Princess

me about that mean slapping Zeerooty thing she wrote to put me into.

Dolly answered she would never never speak to me again and I told her I would not to her in all my long life and we both cried on our beds. When we must get up to undress, Dolly took off the nugget bracelet I gave her Christmas and put it on my bureau and me the same on hers with the silver candlestick she gave me.

So now I lost my chum all on account of that Zeerooty. I never expected to slap any girl again but I would Zeerooty if she were only in the world to receive my slap. And I won't play her! I won't! I won't! I wont!

Your mad and Sorry
Giovanna.

Angel Mother All I Got,

It is now three days that Dolly and I don't speak any more than frozen icicles and I most wish I was one to fall down and

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break into little pieces and be finished. My heart is so heavy, it's like carrying the coal-hod at the asylum to get upstairs with it to my room. Dolly and I both got the proudness not to tell what our mad is about so the other girls guess much but know nothing.

O Mother, if I had never been born, what troubles I would have missed, most of all this cold mad lonesome to be a deafndumb with Dolly studying on her side of our room a deafndumb also, and she my used-to-be-dearest next to you.

If Dolly would only say she is sorry she wrote that Zeerooty on me I could forgive her in a minute, but she never will. And I don't blame Dolly, Mother, as I do Zeerooty her own self. You know how Dolly told that those characters would fuss back at her and dictate how they wanted to be fixed. Dolly is ever a quick forgiver and never would have thought to stick in that blow for all the girls to remember me as

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I was in my slapping days if Zeerooty has not hypnotized her to do it.

But now she has chozen between me and that Zeerooty whom she loves like a mother her bad child to think all its meanness darling and cute. She cannot see me write in this letter "Dear Dolly, take me and not your old Zeerooty," but I wouldn't say it to her out loud, not for the big round world in my pocket. Goodbye my Dolly chum, I hope Zeerooty makes you happy you don't look happy though, but sorry and frozeup same as me.

I feel my cry is coming Mother, and I must get to bed quick and squish it in the pillow for Dolly not to hear. I'm glad you are not a chum to bandon me for some old Zeerooty. Mothers are just the one thing in the world you can always keep unless God takes them up to Heaven.

Goodnight truest and darlingist,
Giovanna.

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Treasure Mother,

A real lady actress, friend to the Principal, came and performed like Lady Macbeth in Assembly this afternoon just for us girls. I was so blue I didn't want to go but we all must. She was dressed very curious and talked for her husband Mr. Macbeth also just as I used to for my doll only she made her voice big instead of little. He wanted to be king as the witches proffyside but he had some feelings not to kill the nice gentle old really truly king come to visit him like an uncle and explained how murdering your company is not good form. I guess Lady Macbeth's first name must begin with Z. O Mother, I shook till it squeaked the seat when she dared him and called him old fraidcat. Of course he didn't have to mind her but a wife ought to keep her husband out of meanness all she can and not put him up to more like Lady Macbeth.

I was sure that actress lady must be very

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bad by nature to look like that out of her eyes and dangerous, ever full of meanness to do somebody. I wondered how our dear Principal could stand her for a friend.

When she came in the reception room after she had acted I did not know her in a tailor suit and smiling sweet, not a bit like that Lady Macbeth. I was standing close by the Principal and my astonish jumped right out of me to say how she looked not mean but a lovely lady. The Principal laughed and told how good that actress is to her little brothers and orphans and beggars and adored by all.

O the Principal made me most die of mortifide to lead me to the actress lady and introdoose me by telling right out loud my thinks of her. But she was so Heavenly tackfull Mother, that by and by I could ask her the question sticking right out of my soul to be asked—how she could act herself into a mean one like Lady Macbeth whom she must ever hate and put on her

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looks and ways for all persons to detest and not love.

When she was gone I ran quick upstairs with my heart no more like coal hods. There sat Dolly on her side writing like crazy in her play notebook. I never thought not to speak first and I cried out, "O Dolly, it is the duty of my face to be a picture of Zeerooty's face and my voice to sound like hers and my actions to be same as her actions to show the audients what Zeerooty is like and not what I am like which does not count at such a time. What a silly I was—all ignoranty and pursynal like you said—so please forgive and I will play Zeerooty dandy as I can."

Dolly looked up awful sweet out of her writing and answered, "No, Giovanna, you had the right to hate Zeerooty because that actress explained it to be the smartness of Shakespeare for Lady Macbeth to have some good feelings mixed in with her badness and those repentants in her sleep and

Giovanna as the Wrong Princess

to be no monster. My Zeerooty was a fusser and a scowler and a screecher every minute which is to be a monster. I'm glad you hated her; she is now detestable to me the same, so here I sit writing some good feelings and repentants into her."

I asked "Shall Zeerooty walk in my sleep?'" and she answered she would be no copycat to Shakespeare but ever origynal and make me into a nun at the last instead of a scratcher of Hop-livelys.

Then I remembered what my real maddest mad was about, only it was so good to be speaking with my Dolly chum again I didn't much care, but I just asked, "Dolly, would it be the same with you if Zeerooty should pull your hair instead of slap, for the girls to not remember my dreadful scandle of slapping you during my first dinner in this school?"

O Mother, Dolly had forgotten all about that slap or she never would have put it in her play and she begged please forgive.

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We hugged and kissed like crazy and went down to dinner with our arms around as always. I am so happy I love even poor old naughty Zeerooty.

Your devoted daughter
The Wrong Princess.

GIOVANNA'S COMMENCEMENT

O MOTHER Dear,

Such high sky cheer but feelings
queer rezembling fear though love burns
clear to know that we're so close and near.

Why I almost made a sonnut! I must
be catching poetry off Dolly's Muse. A
Muse, Mother, is a ghosty person only not
made of fog and clam like a real ghost but
just of air. It hawnts round waiting to
help you write poetry but you got to be a
true genius first. No other girl in this
school has a Muse except Dolly and I don't
mind it hawnting in our room because all
it does is to keep the poetry stirred up in
Dolly's soul.

This is not a real letter for the post office
or for you to read ever, but just scribble in
the back of my composition book which

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cannot be dissybedient now the term is over all but fun and exes. Dolly down in the studyroom crams and crams till she daresent talk for fear of losing something out of her mind. I am writing this sortof letter just to keep myself out of crazyness while I wait alone in my room the long, long, long hours before you come. My im- aginer can see you in the cars this minute. You seem to be looking out of the window and I wonder if you got little thinks of your Giovanna waiting here. On the seat by your side is some big package of my surprise for which you did not wish me to meet you at the train, but please I don't need that surprise—just you! you! you! Since receiving your letter, the big school clock has ever ticked "Mother's coming! Mother's coming!" till I wrote it all round the edge of my music book when I never knew I did.

I want you to come so bad I can hardly live and yet—O Dearest, all the corners of

Giovanna's Commencement

my soul are full of scares. I stare in the mirror until Dolly tells I am getting vanity on myself, but it is my wonder, wonder what my looks and ways will be to you. I hope you do not forget how Dago black I am and have dizzypoint in me for that. And my manners—I have not worn them so long as the other girls—sometimes I lose them off when I am embearest or forget.

Let's count me up together, Mother, now before you come. I'm bigger—that's by the grace of God as the preacher says. I wear the clothes of grandeur—that's by the grace of your love. I am a teeny smarter in my head—that's by the grace of my teachers.

Spelling is still my ennemy. I don't see why God made so many ways to spell words and then only put one way in the Dictionery which He must have written like the Bible and Encyclopedia since too big for any person to write in his long life.

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Fractions are mean too and I hate them! What is the good to divide units in all those stingey parts which the denommy-nator shows how many and the numerator what you give each person? Fractions is how they used to cut the pie at the asylum on Saturday. If it wasn't for fractions there would be no poors in this world for everybody would have good and plenty of all things. O Darlingest, there is no numerator and denomnynator between you and me; you are my entire Mother instead of 1-90 of a matron I used to have.

And deffynitions are what Dolly calls my pon sassy norum which is Latin for the hardest ever. I could not remember moonshiner away from honeymoon till Dolly explained which one makes whisky on the still and which one is two going off alone after the wedding on a journey away from all encumbrants. They are still romantics and just hate to have anybody close except themselves, especially children big

Giovanna's Commencement

enough to be obzervant. Dolly learned that last outside of the book.

I was sure, Mother, I had scribbled away this whole hour and when I saw it to be only half gone, I shook my little watch and then kissed it to forgive me.

It is Commencement Week in this school and with me the same because I commence to live by your side. I wonder if I will ever acheeve the Senior kind to wear a graduated dress and make a grand bow (down, head, neck and chest; up chest, neck and head) to receive my dipploma tied with blue ribbon and you in the front row quite an old lady (though plenty young now) for all the grades and classes I must get promoted through. Dolly is a Freshy which is to be despized by Seniors, but anyway Freshies have class things like a yell, a color, and a spirit, while the grades have not and so are despized by Freshies the same.

Mother, so near, so near . . . O O I be-

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lieve there comes the maid to call me downstairs. . . .

Sweet Mother dear did wait below, and I to talk with her did go, but acted like when I was young, they used to say "Cat's got your tongue."

O Muse, go way and let me alone! Can't you see I'm too miserable to fool with poetry? Go and hawnt Dolly down in the study-room; only you'll find she's dreadfully busy cramming math and she won't bother with you either; she's got real troubles same as me—not the fancy poetical kind!

Please excuse me, Muse, to be so cross and rude, but it's real aggervating of you when i'm just writing down my woe in this same old composition book and you change it into doggyrells which is all the kind you can unwind in me since I am no genius like my Dolly chum. I suppose it's missing her makes you try to poetize me.

Giovanna's Commencement

Now be good and you may look over my shoulder though the Principal says for that not to be polite.

I shook some as I opened the reception room door and there was Mother, grander and wonderfuller than even my remembers. She met me on the first oriental rug and hugged me in her arms and kissed my cheeks and I was Heavenly happy.

But Odear! my orgins of speech wouldn't act hardly at all. A teacher says we are full of orgins—not the music kind which would be nicer only I guess we wouldn't stay in tune and then how bad we would sound up to God. Mother sat down and me too just like any other time to sit in a chair. O it was so funny and glorious to have her close like that, it got me awful dazzled up and all I could talk was "Yes, Mother," "No, Mother" like some silly doll when you pull its string. Why didn't you come down stairs Muse, and hawnt some poetry into me—even that

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would have been better than "Yes, Mother," "No, Mother" every minute.

My origin of thought worked right along but of course Mother couldn't hear it. When she asked was I in a hurry for my surprise I said outside "No, Mother," but my think spoke "Before you came, Dearest, my soul was boiling over with hurry like a teakettle but by your side I got no hurry in the big world."

Mother asked didn't I wish I had a father and I answered "No, Mother" but my think exclaimed: "For the stupid I am, Mother Dear must take up any question she can, like some tackfull lady talking to a nidiot." I felt so mortified I was almost some glad when she kissed me goodbye on the red rug in the hall. O all the night I dreamed and dreamed that first visit and the words we were going to speak, Mother to me and me to Mother! O dear! O dear! O dear!

Giovanna's Commencement

Come hawnt me, O Muse, if you want to, for Mother Sweet was just sitting in that chair by the table right in this room, mine and Dolly's. It is evening but it seemed as if the sun shone in all the windows at once!

Mother said "Here I am again, now don't be so diffydent and sollum."

My thinks hollered that I wouldn't but "No, Mother," was all I could speak and there I was the same chumpy nidiot of the afternoon.

Mother laughed. O Musie, her laugh rezebles Men—somebody's "Spring Song" which Dolly ever plays on the piano for company, only Mother tinklies softer and more sweet.

Then she wanted to see my "Girl's School Memory Book" and I sat close on my stool of putting on shoes to explain all with gladness, since its writings and pasteings were done for her precious eyes. I

The Heart of an Orphan

got my tongue back from the cat and talked and talked and talked—now, O Muse, what do you think of that?

When the book was finished, Mother meddytated to herself. By and by I put a little kiss to her hand and it fell on her rings, a diamond solitary and another unfancy, “Daughter,” she said, “I love those rings better than my fingers.” She meddytated some more while little watch on top of my heart ticked “Mother’s here! Mother’s here!”

Pretty soon she sortof waked herself up and said, “Giovanna, when you have a Mother and no father, you are still half of an orphan.”

I told her, “I don’t feel the least bit halffy, Mother, but so wrapped all round by your love there isn’t any chilly side to my soul!”

She spoke how splendid for me to own a father like Dolly and the other girls.

I answered: “No thank you, please,

Giovanna's Commencement

because a father would divide our loves and so bring fractions into our family, now a Heavenly unit of you and me.”

I remembered her asking me in the reception room about wanting a father and now I understood it was not just for tack-full but for really truly. All my time as her daughter it has been her angelical wish for me nevermore to see other girls with any pretty and me not.

I asked her, “If he is my father, mustn’t that make him your weddy husband?”

“Yes,” answered Mother, and blushed as any really lady must all times do when talk is about their husbands and they have none.

Then we meddytated some more and I thought how every man in the big world who sees Mother must wish he could have her for his weddy wife to sit forever by his side.

O Muse, I was afraid not to be respeck-full if I talked more to Mother on that

The Heart of an Orphan

blushy subject, but she asked me for my thinks so I spoke them out.

“Mother, he mightn’t suit you the leastest bit and perhaps you don’t care for husbands anyways so please don’t trouble yourself since you are to me plenty of parents.”

The Principal says there isn’t any joy like selfsacryfice and that is the true, for Mother’s face was just angel shiney with happiness to think of providing me to a father which she got to stand his long life as an old weddy husband always round in her way.

She just tinklied some more laugh and told me I could come tomorrow to her room at the hotel and receive my grand surprise. Then she went away. Goodnight, O Dolly’s Muse.

Precious, Funny, Darling Mother,

It seems like the night of day after tomorrow but it isn’t it’s the same evening

Giovanna's Commencement

tied right on to the same day of the afternoon I went to receive my surprise. O I must write all down here quick, quick or I will believe it to be just some perhaps I made up with myself and it isn't—it's the true—the great big wonderful gloryous true! This time I got to write it like a letter to you, Mother, as I so long have the habit and not to any Muse of slim air. Anyway Musie is busy this evening wispering a class song into Dolly.

In your room waited a big tall high bundle like no other in the whole world tied round and round with white paper and white ribbon.

I cried out was it a statyou to stand in my room and you said a little like that.

I asked was it a Pollo, god of handsome looks? You said better than a Pollo, and the bundle shook as if wind was blowing it. I pulled some paper off and there was cloth like a coat and I said I was glad for my statyou to not be cold and pitiful like the

The Heart of an Orphan

Pollo of the Museum seemed when I put my hand on him. That bundle shook more like mice running up and down inside the paper and I felt creepyfied but I pulled again and there was the real hand of a man.

I shrieked it was a burglar and ran away to you and shook and shook but you laughed and said "Goosey, would I bring you a burglar for a present?"

"O! O! O!" I screamed, "It's my new father!" But I couldn't pull any more paper off him for shakes, so he did himself and stood there, a big, grand, fine, dandy, shiverlrous gentleman! I said "Thank you, Mother for this nice father which is handsomer than Dolly's or a Pollo but don't make trouble to yourself just on account of me—does he suit you for a weddy husband?"

How you both laughed and ran together and hugged and laughed like anything and



"I pulled again and there was the real hand of a man"

Giovanna's Commencement

explained you were already married and having your honeymoons!

O and then my happiness got an awful bumpy ripple when I had quick remembers of Dolly explaining how honeymooners are romantic solitarys with their worst hate on children old enough to be obzervant.

I ran and looked out of the window and twinkled my eyes hard not to cry. I stared at a girl walking with a blue parrysol and I had awful jealous feelings to be just an old rag doll adoption out of an asylum and now not wanted by you any more. I had those feelings while that girl passed by seven lamp posts and then I saw what a mean, selfish, horrid, piggy thing I was, not to like you to be a romantic and have such happy looks on you as I never saw there before!

Then you and Daddy hugged me on both sides and asked what was my sadness and I was ashamed but must tell with all those

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coaxes and you both said this wasn't any Dolly deffynition kind of honeymoon but you two wanted it all trimmed up with children. For that we are going next week to a cottage by the same lake where the orphans stay in a big camp with the money out of the kind old gentleman's hat at Christmas. And Daddy says in its turn of ten at once every orphan gets a ride in his gassylean launch on the lake.

I can't hardly believe yet that Isabella is to come for her vacation from the school where she was put by the will of her deadn-gone Bennyfactor and that Dolly is to visit for a month and my Italian cousins out of their tenement. Joy! joy! joy! joy!

O! O! O! and Daddy Dear took a dockument out of his pocket about you and him adopting me leegully for all my life! That dockument is my dipploma to be graduated out of the orphan school; only I made no down-head, up-chest bow but

Giovanna's Commencement

plenty of hugs to you and Daddy Dear instead.

O and he don't bring fractions in our family and divide our loves as I was afraid! It was before he came we were fractionary but now complete. And my love for him is not cut off my love for you but is new by itself.

This is my last blank page, but I don't need any more because now I'm all finished up like a once-on-a-time story in my green fairy book to "live happy ever after" with my adored parents. Amen! Amen! Amen!

Giovanna.

THE END.

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